

FRONTISPICE

Vol. IV.



Sidi Hali purchases his Sister & Mother from Slavery.

Published as the Act directs Nov^r. 4. 1780.

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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
Gil Blas of Santillane.

A NEW TRANSLATION,

By T. SMOLLETT, M. D.

AUTHOR OF RODERICK RANDOM.

VOL. IV.

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[Continuation of BOOK V. CHAP. I.]

MORALEZ, by such discourse, secured the purse of the old man, who came and rejoined us; and finding his daughter and me engaged in mutual compliments, interrupted our conversation, by telling Florentina of the obligation he lay under to me; and, on that score, made me professions which convinced me of his gratitude. I laid hold of such a favourable disposition, and told the citizen, that the most sensible mark of acknowledgment he could shew, would be to hasten my marriage with his daughter. He yielded with a good grace to my impatience, assuring me, that in three days at farthest I should be Florentina's husband, and that instead of six thousand ducats, which he had promised for her dower, he would give me ten, as a proof of his being deeply affected with the service I had done him.

Moralez and I, therefore, lived with the honest man Jerome de Moyadas, kindly treated, and in the agreeable expectation of ten thousand ducats, with which we proposed to make a sudden decampment from Merida. Our joy, however, was checked by

fear: we were apprehensive, that in less than three days, the true son of Juan Velez de Menbrilla would arrive, and cross our good fortune.

This fear was by no means ill founded: for, the very next day, a kind of peasant, loaded with a portmanteau, came to the house of Florentina's father, when I was not at home, though my comrade was present. "Sir (said the peasant, to the old man) I belong to a young gentleman of Calatrava, called Signior de Menbrilla, who is to be your son-in-law. We are just arrived, and he will be here presently. I came before to give you notice of his approach." He had scarce spoke these words when his master appeared: a circumstance that surprized the old man very much, and disconcerted Moralez a little.

Pedro, who was a very genteel young fellow, dressed himself to Florentina's father; but the honest citizen did not give him time to finish his discourse, and turning to my companion, asked the meaning of all this. Then Moralez, who was second to no man on earth in impudence, assumed an air of assurance, and said to the old man, "Sir, these two men belong to the troop of thieves, who robbed us on the highway; I recollect them both very well, particularly him who has the audacity to call himself the son of Signior Juan Velez de la Menbrilla." The old citizen believed Moralez, and, persuaded that the strangers were cheats, said to them, "Gentlemen, you are come too late, your scheme is prevented! Pedro de la Menbrilla has been in my house since yesterday." "Take care what you say (answered the young man of Calatrava) you have got an impostor in your family; for you must know, that Juan Velez de la Menbrilla has no other son than me." "I know better (replied the old man) and am not ignorant of your profession: don't you recollect this young man, and remember his master whom you robbed?" "If I was not in your house (said Pedro) I would punish the insolence of that cheat, who has

the presumption to call me a robber. Let him thank your presence that restrains my indignation. Sir, (added he) you are imposed upon. I am the young man to whom your brother Augustin promised his niece. If you desire it, I can shew all the letters which he wrote to my father, on the subject of the marriage. Will you not believe it when you see the picture of Florentina, which he sent to me some time before his death."

" No (said the old citizen, interrupting him) neither the picture nor the letters will convince me : I know very well in what manner they fell into your hands, and I advise you as a friend, to be gone from Merida as soon as you can." " This is too much (cried the young gentleman in his turn) I will not suffer my name to be stolen with impunity, nor myself to be treated like an highwayman. I know some people in this place, whom I will find, and return to confound the impostor that has prejudiced you against me." So saying, he retired with his valet, and Moralez remained master of the field : nay, this adventure made Jerome de Moyadas resolve to have the marriage celebrated that very day, and he went out instantly, to give the necessary orders for the occasion.

Though my comrade was very well pleased to see Florentina's father in a disposition so favourable for us, he was far from being perfectly at ease; fearing the consequence of the measures which he concluded Pedro would certainly take ; and he waited for me with impatience, to communicate what had happened. Finding him, at my return, plunged in a profound reverie, " What is the matter, friend ? (said I) thou seemest in a brown study." He replied, " If I am, it is not without reason." And informed me of the whole affair ; adding, thou seest what cause I have to muse. It was thou alone who rashly threw us into that dilemma. It was a shining enterprize, I own, and would have crowned thee with glory had

it succeeded : but in all appearance, it will end ill ; and it is my advice, that in order to prevent explanations, we immediately betake ourselves to our heels, with the feather which we have plucked from the honest man's wing.

" Mr. Moralez (answered I to this proposal) you yield to difficulties, I find, very soon, and don't do a great deal of honour to Don Matthias de Cordel, and the other cavaliers with whom you lived at Toledo : one who has served his apprenticeship under such able masters, ought not to be easily alarmed. As for me, who intend to walk in the steps of these heroes, and prove myself a worthy pupil, I will bear up against the obstacle that terrifies you, and make my utmost effort to surmount it." " If you accomplish that, (said my companion) I will perser you to all the great men in Plutarch."

Just as Moralez had done speaking, Jerome de Moyadas coming in, said to me, " You shall be my son in law this very evening. Your servant (I suppose) has told you what happened. What do you think of the impudence of the rogue, who would have made me believe that he was the son of my mother's correspondent ? " Signior (answered I, in a melancholy tone, and with the most ingenuous air I could affect) I find I am not qualified to carry on deceit ; I must sincerely own that I am not the son of Juan Velez de Menbrilla." " What do I hear ! (cried the old man, interrupting me with equal precipitation and surprize) how ! you not the young man to whom my brother" — " Pray sir (said I, interrupting him in my turn) be so good as to hear me to an end, I have loved your daughter these eight days, during which my passion has detained me at Merida ; and yesterday after coming to your assistance, I was about to demand her in mariage, when you stopt my mouth, by giving me to understand, that she was destined for another. You told me that your brother, in his last moments, conjured you to bestow her upon Pedro de

la Menbrilla; that you promised to comply with his request, and, in short, that you was a slave to your word. This information I confess overwhelmed me, and my love, reduced to despair, inspired me with the stratagem I put in practice. I must tell you, however, that I secretly upbraided myself with the trick I had put upon you; but I flattered myself, that you would forgive it, when I should have discovered it, and convinced you that I am an Italian prince, who travel incognito; and that my father is sovereign of certain vallies situated between the Swiss, the Milanese, and Savoy. I imagined that you would be agreeably surprized, when I should have revealed my birth; and I felt all the pleasure of a delicate and passionate husband, in the hope of declaring it to Florentina after our marriage. Heaven (added I, changing my tone) would not indulge me in so much joy; Pedro de la Menbrilla appears, and I must restore him his name, how much soever the restitution will cost me. You are engaged by your promise, to chuse him for a son-in-law; and it is your duty to prefer him to me, without regard to my rank, or compassion for the cruel situation to which you are going to reduce me. I will not pretend to represent, that your brother was only the uncle of your daughter, and that you being her father, it is more just to acquit yourself of the obligation you owe me, than to make it a point of honour to keep a promise which is but slightly binding."

" Yes, doubtless, it is so! (cried Jerome de Movadas) therefore I do not intend to hesitate between you and Don Pedro de Menbrilla. If my brother Augustin was still alive, he would not blame me for giving the preference to a man who saved my life, and who is, moreover, a prince, who does not disdain to ask my alliance. I must be an enemy to my own happiness, and entirely deprived of my understanding, if I did not give you my daughter, and even prefs the celebration of the marriage." " But, Signor

TO The ADVENTURES of

nor (I replied) do nothing impetuously, consult your interest only, and, notwithstanding the nobility of my blood"—“Sure you jest! (said he, interrupting me) ought I to hesitate one moment? no, my prince, I most humbly beseech you to honour the happy Florentina with your hand, this very evening.” “Well, (said I) be it so; go carry the news yourself, and inform her of her glorious fate.”

While the honest citizen flew eagerly to tell his daughter, that she had made the conquest of a prince, Moralez, who had heard the whole conversation, threw himself on his knees before me, saying, “Monsignior the Italian prince, son of a sovereign of the vallies situated between the Swiss, Milanese and Savoy, give me leave to embrace the feet of your highness, and testify the excessive joy I feel. Upon the faith of a knave, I look upon you as a prodigy! I thought myself the first man in the world, but truly I strike to you, although you have less experience than I.” “What! you are no longer uneasy, I hope,” said I to him. “O! not at all (answered he) I am no longer afraid of Signior Pedro; let him come again as soon as he pleases.” Moralez and I being now firm set in the stirrups, began to regulate the course we should take with the dowry, on which we depended so much, that we could not have thought ourselves more secure of it, had it been already in our pockets. We had not, as yet, got it for all that, and the catastrophe of the adventure did not answer our expectation.

In a little time, the young man of Calatrava returned, accompanied by two citizens and an alguazil, as formidable, on account of his whiskers and swarthy complexion, as of his employment. Florentina's father being present, “Signior de Moyadas, (said Pedro to him) I have brought hither three credible people, who know me, and can tell you who I am.” “Yes, sure (cried the alguazil) I can tell, and I certify to all whom it may concern, that I konw

know you. Your name is Pedro, and you are the only son of Juan Velez de la Menbrilla: whoever maintains the contrary is an impostor." "I believe you, Mr. Alguazil (said the honest man Jerome de Moyadas) your evidence is sacred with me, as well as that of the gentlemen merchants, who are along with you. I am fully convinced that the young cavalier, who conducted you hither, is the only son of my brother's correspondents: but that does not signify, I am no longer in the mind to give him my daughter."

"Oho! that's another affair (said the alguazil) I came hither only to assure you, that I know this young man. You are master of your child, and no body can compel you to part with her against your inclination." "Nor do I intend (said Pedro, interrupting him) to offer violence to the inclination of Signior de Moyadas; but he will give me leave to ask why he has changed his sentiments, or if he has any cause to complain of me. Let me be assured, at least, that I have not lost the sweet hope of being his son-in-law by my own misbehaviour." "I have no cause to complain of you (replied the old man) and will even own, that it is with regret I see myself under a necessity of breaking my word, for which I conjure you to forgive me. I am persuaded that you are too generous to take it amiss, that I prefer to you a rival, who has saved my life. Here he is, (pursued he, shewing me to the company) this is the person who rescued me from the most imminent danger; and that my excuse may have still more force, I must inform you that he is no less than an Italian prince.

At these last words, Pedro became mute and confounded; the two merchants stared with the utmost surprize: but the alguazil, accustomed to look upon the worst side of every thing, suspected this wonderful adventure to be a trick, that might turn out to his advantage; he eyed me very attentively, and his

good will being baffled by my features, which were utterly unknown to him, he examined my comrade with the same attention. Unluckily for my highness, he recollect ed Moralez, and remembering to have seen him in the prison of Cindad Real, " Ah ha ! (cried he) here is one of my customers. I remember this gentleman, / who, I assure you, is one of the most perfect sharpers within the kingdoms and principalities of Spain." " Softly, Mr. Alguazil (said Jerome de Moyadas) the young man, whom you paint so disadvantageously, is the domestic of a prince." " Very well (replied the alguazil) I know enough to form my resolution accordingly, and judge of the master by the man. I don't doubt that these gallants are two cheats, who have agreed to impose upon you. I know how to manage in such cases ; and to let you see that these wits are adventurers, I will carry them instantly to gaol. I intend to introduce them to a private conversation with Monsieur the Corrégidor; after which, they will feel that whipping is not yet out of fashion." " Hold there, master officer (replied the old man) don't let us push matters so far : people of your profession are not afraid of giving pain to a worthy man. May not this valet be a rogue, and his master a man of honour ? is it a new thing to see sharpers in the service of princes ?" " You joke with your princes (said the alguazil) this young fellow is a knight of the post, you may depend upon it, and I arrest him and his comrade in the king's name. I have twenty soldiers at the door, who shall drag them to prison, if they refuse to go with a good grace. Come, my prince (addressing himself to me) let us march."

I was thunderstruck at these words, as well as Moralez, and our concern rendered us suspected to Jerome de Moyadas ; or rather convinced him, that we actually had a design to defraud him. On this occasion, however, he behaved like a gallant man ; saying to the alguazil, " Master officer, perhaps your suspic-

cions are false, and perhaps they are but too true. Be it as it will, let us dive no farther into the affair : let these two young cavaliers retire wheresoever they shall please to go, and I beg you will not oppose their retreat : it is a favour I ask, in order to acquit myself of the obligation I owe to them." " Were I strictly to do my duty, (answered the alguazil) I should imprison these gentlemen, without having any regard to your intreaty ; but, for your sake, I will relax a little provided that they quit the town this instant : for if I meet them to-morrow, egad ! they shall see what will become of them."

When Moralez and I understood that we were free, we recollected ourselves a little, endeavoured to talk boldly, and affirm that we were persons of honour ; but the alguazil silenced us with a fierce look ; and I don't know how these people have an ascendant over us. We were obliged, therefore, to abandon Florentina and her portion to Pedro de la Menbrilla, who, doubtless, became the son-in law of Jerome de Moyadas, and retire with all speed, taking the road to Truxillo, with the consolation of having, at least, got an hundred pistoles by the adventure. About an hoar before night, passing by a little village, with a resolution of going farther before we should halt, we perceived an inn of a pretty good appearance for that place, and the landlord with his wife sitting on long stones at the door. The husband, a tall, meagre old fellow, thrummed upon a wretched guitar, for the diversion of his wife, who seemed to listen with pleasure. " Gentlemen (cried the landlord, when he saw we did not stop) I advise you to halt at this place : you won't find a village within three weary leagues of this ; and even there, I assure you, you won't be so well served as here : take my word for it, and walk into my house, where I will entertain you handsomely, at a reasonable rate." We suffered ourselves to be persuaded, and approaching the man and his wife, bid them good even ; and having feated ourselves by

them,

them, began, all four, to talk of indifferent subjects. The landlord said he was an officer of the holy brotherhood ; and his wife was a fat, merry dame, who seemed to understand very well how to vend her commodities.

Our conversation was interrupted by the arrival of twelve or fifteen cavaliers, some mounted on mules, and some a-horseback, followed by thirty baggage moyls loaded with bales. " Ah ! what a number of princes ! (cried the landlord, at sight of so many people) where shall I find lodging for them all ?" In a moment the village was crowded with men and beasts. There was luckily, near the inn, a vast barn, in which the moyls and the baggage were disposed : the mules and horses belonging to the cavaliers, were put in other places ; and as for the men, they did not concern themselves so much about finding beds, as in bespeaking a good supper. The landlord, his wife, and a young maid-servant belonging to the house, were not idle ; they slaughtered all the poultry in their yard, which joined to some ragouts made of rabbits and oats, and a plentiful dish of soup, composed of colliflowers and mutton, furnished entertainment enough for the whole company.

Moralez and I looked at the cavaliers, who, from time to time, eyed us also. At last, we entered into conversation, and told them, that if it was agreeable, we would sup in company. They assured us, that we could not do them a greater pleasure, so we sat down all together at table. There was one among them who seemed to be the chief, and for whom the rest, though otherwise very familiar, did not fail to shew some deference : 'tis true, indeed, he kept the upper end, talked in an elevated tone of voice, and even contradicted, sometimes, in a cavalier manner, the sentiments of the rest, who, far from replying, in the same manner to him, seemed to respect his opinions. The discourse falling by accident on Andalusia ; and Moralez taking it into his head to praise Seville,

Seville, this man said to him, Signior cavalier, you are making the eulogium of the city where I first drew breath, or, at least, I was born in its neighbourhood, since the town of Mayrena gave me to the world." "I can say the same thing, (answered my companion) I was likewise born at Mayrena, and I must certainly know your parents: pray, whose son are you?" "I am (said the cavalier) the son of an honest notary, called Martin Moralez." "Upon my faith! (cried my comrade, with emotion) the adventure is extremely singular: you are then my eldest brother, Manuel Moralez?" "The very same, (said the other) and you are, I suppose, my young brother Lewis, whom I left in the cradle, when I quitted my father's house?" "That is my name, indeed," (replied my comrade). Upon which they both got up, and embraced one another with great affection. Then Signior Manuel said to the company, "Gentlemen, this event is altogether marvellous! I have, by accident, met and discovered a brother, whom I have not seen these twenty years and more; allow me to present him to the company." All the cavaliers, who kept themselves standing, out of complaisance, saluted the young Moralez, and loaded him with caresses. Afterwards, we sat down again at table, where we remained all night, without going to bed; the two brothers sitting by one another, and conversing by themselves, about their family, while the other guests drank and made merry.

Lewis, after a long conversation with Manuel, taking me aside, said, "All these cavaliers are domestics of the Count de Montanos, whom the king has lately named for viceroy of Majorca. They are conducting their master's equipage to Alicant, where they are to embark. My brother, who is become steward to that nobleman, has proposed to carry me along with him; and, on account of the reluctance I expressed in leaving you, told me, that if you would accompany us, he would procure for you a good employment. Dear friend,

friend (added he) I advise thee not to disdain the offer ; let us go together to the island of Majorca ; if we find it agreeable, we will stay there, and if we shall be displeased with our situation, we will return to Spain."

I willingly embraced this proposal ; young Moralez and I joined the count's officers, and set out with them from the inn, before day. Having, by long marches, gained the city of Alicant, I bought a guitar, and took off a handsome suit of cloaths, before our embarkation ; thinking of nothing but the island of Majorca, and Lewis Moralez was in the same disposition. We seemed to have renounced sharping altogether. To tell you the truth, we had a mind to pass for persons of honour among the cavaliers, in whose company we were ; and that kept a check upon our geniuses. At laft we went incrilly on board, flattering ourelfes with the hopes of being at Majorca in a very little time : but scarce had we cleared the gulph of Alicant, when a terrible tempest arose. I might in this place of my relation, take an opportunity to make a fine description of the storm ; to paint the air all on fire, to make the thunder roar, the winds whistle, the mountains billows roll, &c. But all these flowers of rhetoric apart, I assure you the hurricane was violent, and obliged us to bear away for the point of the island of Cabrera, a desert ille, in which there is a little fort, at that time garrisoned by an officer, and five or six soldiers, who gave us a very hospitable reception.

As we were obliged to stay there several days, in order to repair our sails and tackle, we invented different kinds of amusements, to pass the time agreeably. Each followed his own inclinations : some played at primero, others sought different diversions, and I went to walk through the island, accompanied by those who loved such exercise. We skipt from rock to rock ; for the ground was very uneven, full of stones, and very deficient in good soil. One day,

while

while we considered these parched, withered places, and admired the caprice of nature, that shew's herself fruitful or barren, as she pleases, our noses were invaded, all of a sudden, with a most agreeable smell. We immediately turned to the eastward, from whence that odour came, and perceived, with astonishment, among the rocks, a large, round, green spot surrounded with honey-suckles, even more beautiful and sweet-scented than those that grow in Andalusia. We approached, with pleasure, those charming shrubs, which perfumed the air all around, and found that they bordered upon the entry of a very deep cavern, which being large and light, we descended to the bottom of it, turning by steps of stone, the ends of which were adorned with flowers, the whole forming a natural winding stair-case. When we had got down, we saw several little rills of water, which derived their sources from drops that incessantly distilled from the rocks within, creeping along sand more yellow than gold, and losing themselves in the earth. The water seemed so pure, that we were tempted to drink, and found it so fresh, that we resolved to return next day to the same place, with some bottles of wine, persuaded that we should empty them with vast pleasure.

It was with regret we quitted such an agreeable place, and, when we went back to the fort, we did not fail to boast of our discovery; but the commandant cautioned us, as a friend, against returning to the cavern, with which we were so much charmed. "For what?" (said I to him) "Is there any thing to fear?" "Yes, without doubt, (he replied); the corsairs of Algiers and Tripoli sometimes land on this isle, to water at that spring, and one day surprized two soldiers of my garrison, whom they made slaves." It was in vain for the officer to tell us this with a very serious air; he could not persuade us; for we believed that he jested: and next day I returned to the cavern, with three more of my companions, without providing

ing ourselves with fire-arms, to shew that we dreaded nothing. Young Moralez would not be of the party, chusing rather to stay with his brother, and play in the fort.

Having descended, as the day before, to the bottom of the cave, we cooled some bottles of wine that we had brought along with us in the rivulets; and while we drank them deliciously, playing on the guitar, and conversing pleasantly together, we saw several men appear at the mouth of the cavern above, with large whiskers, turbans, and Turkish dres. We imagined that it was a part of the count's domestics, with the commandant of the fort, who had thus disguised themselves in order to frighten us; and, prepossessed with this fancy, began to laugh, letting no less than ten of them come down, without thinking of defending ourselves. We were, however, soon undeceived in a melancholy manner, and convinced that it was a corsair, who came with his people to carry us off. "Surrender, you dogs, (he cried, in the Castilian tongue) or you shall be all put to the sword." At the same time his followers presented their carbines to us, and we should have undergone a fine discharge, had we made the least resistance—We preferred slavery to death, and gave our swords to the pirate, who ordered us to be loaded with chains, and conducted to his vessel, which was not far off: then setting sail, he steered with a fair wind towards Algier.

In this manner were we punished for neglecting the caution of the officer of the garrison. The first thing that the corsair did was to rifle us of all the money we had.—What a fine windfall for him! the two hundred pistoles taken from the young citizens of Placentia; the hundred which Moralez had received from Jerome de Moyadas, and which unluckily I had about me, were all swept away without mercy. My companions had also their purses well furnished. In short, it was an excellent prize. The pirate was rejoiced at his good luck; and the rascal, not satisfied

with our plunder, insulted us with his raillery, which we did not feel half so much as the necessity that compelled us to bear it.—After a thousand jokes, he ordered the bottles of wine which we had cooled at the fountain, and which the people had taken care to seize, to be brought to him, and began to empty them with his crew, drinking to our health by way of derision.

During this conjuncture, the countenances of my comrades expressed the pain they felt; and their slavery mortified them the more, because they had formed the most delightful idea of their voyage to the island of Majorca, where they had laid their account with leading a most delicious life.—As for me, I had fortitude enough to project a plan of conduct for myself; and, less afraid than my fellows, entered into conversation with the ralier, and even returned his jokes with a good grace. Pleased with my behaviour, “ Young man (said he) I like thy disposition; for, in the main, instead of sighing and groaning, it is better for one to arm himself with patience, and sail with the stream.—Play to us a small air, (added he, observing that I had a guitar;) let us see what thou canst do.” I obeyed him, as soon as he had ordered my arms to be unchained, and began to thrum upon my guitar in such a manner as acquired his applause.—I had, indeed, learned under the best master in Madrid, and played on that instrument pretty well.—I sang likewise, and my voice gave no less satisfaction.—All the Turks in the vessel expressed the pleasure they felt in hearing me, by gestures of admiration: a circumstance from which I concluded, that their taste for musick was not extremely delicate. The pirate whispered to me, that I should not be an unhappy slave; and that one of my talents might depend upon an employment that would make my captivity very supportable.

I felt some joy at these words; but flattering as they were, I had abundance of uneasiness on the score of

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this occupation, with the promise of which the corsair regaled me. When we arrived at the port of Algier *, we saw a great number of people assembled to receive us, who, as soon as we were landed, shouted with joy; besides, the air resonnded with the confused noise of trumpets, morisco flutes, and other instruments used in that country, which formed a symphony more loud than agreeable. The cause of these rejoicings was a false report which had spread through the city, importing that the renegado Mehemet (this was our pirate's name) had perished in attacking a large Genoese vessel: so that all his friends, informed of his return, were eager in their expressions of joy.

We had no sooner set foot on shore, than I and my companions were conducted to the palace of Dey Solyman, where a Christian secretary, examining us one by one, asked our names, ages, country, religion, and qualifications. Then Mehemet, shewing me to the dey, extolled my voice, and assured him that I played ravishingly on the guitar. This was enough to determine Solyman to chuse me for his own service: accordingly I was detained in his seraglio, while the other captives were led into a public place, and sold according to custom. What Mehemet had foretold to me in the vessel, came to pass.—My condition was very happy; far from being abandoned to jailors, or employed in laborious work, I was, by order of Solyman, disposed of in a particular place, with five or six slaves of quality, who expected every moment to be redeemed, and whose tasks were far from being painful. My busines was to water the orange-trees and flowers in the garden, and I could not have been favoured with a more agreeable occupation.

Solyman was a man about forty years of age, well

* Algier, a city on the coast of Barbary, possessed by the Moors, who are at perpetual war with the Spaniards; and under the protection of the Turk.

shaped, very polite, and for a Turk, mighty gallant. His chief favourite was a Cachemirian * woman, who, by her understanding and beauty, had acquired an absolute dominion over him.—He loved her even to adoration, and treated her every day with some entertainment or other; sometimes with a concert of vocal and instrumental musick, and sometimes with a comedy in the Turkish talte: that is to say, a dramatic poem, in which modesty and decorum was as little regarded as the rules of Aristotle. The favourite, whose name was Farrukhnaz, was passionately fond of these diversions, and even made her women sometimes represent Arabian pieces before the dey; wherein she herself played a part, and charmed all the spectators by the grace and vivacity of her action.. I being one day among the musicians at a representation of this kind, Solyman ordered me to play upon the guitar, and sing alone between the acts. I had the good fortune to please, was very much applauded, and the favourite seemed to look upon me with a favourable eye.

The very next day, while I was busied in watering the orange-trees in the garden, an eunuch passing by me, without stopping or speaking one word, dropt a billet at my feet: I took it up in a confusion made up of fear and joy.—I lay down upon the ground, that I might not be seen from the windows of the seraglio; and concealing myself behind the boxes in which the orange-trees were planted, opened the letter, in which I found a pretty valuable diamond, and these words in good Castilian :

“ Young Christian, thank heaven for thy captivity.—Love and fortune will make thee happy: love, if thou art sensible to the charms of a beautiful woman;

* Cachemire is a country under the dominion of the great Mogul, called the Indian paradise; remarkable for the beauty and wit of its women,

and

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and fortune, if thou hast courage to despise the greatest danger."

I did not in the least doubt that the letter came from the favourite sultana: the style and diamond p^resuaded me that she must have been the author. Besides, that I am not naturally very timorous, the vanity of being in the good graces of a grand signior's mistress, and more than that, the hope of getting from her four times as much money as would be necessary for my ransom, made me form the design of atchieving that adventure, whatever dangers might attend it. I continued my work, musing upon the means of entering the apartment of Farrukhnaz, or rather expecting that she would pave the way; for I concluded that she would not stop there, but at least be at more than half the trouble. I was not mistaken: the same eunuch that passed me before, repassed an hour after, and said, "Christian, hast thou considered: and wilt thou have the boldness to follow me?" I answered, "Yes." He replied, "Very well: Heaven preserve thee—Thou shalt see me again to-morrow morning?" So saying, he retired.—Next day he appeared accordingly, about eight in the morning, and beckoned me to him. I obeyed the signal, and he conducted me into a hall, where there was a large piece of linen, which another eunuch and he had brought thither, and which they were to carry to the sultana, for the decoration of an Arabian piece, that she was preparing for the entertainment of the dey.

The two eunuchs, having spread out the cloth, laid me along within it, and at the hazard of my being suffocated, rolled it up again with me in the middle: then, each taking one end of it, carried me thus, unquestioned, into the bed-chamber of the fair Cache-mirian, who had nobody with her but an old slave devoted to her pleasure. When the two unrolled the cloth, Farrukhnaz, at sight of me, broke out into transports of joy, that well discovered the genius of women

women in that country—Bold as I naturally was, I could not see myself transported, all of a sudden, into the secret apartment of the women, without being seized with fear. The lady easily perceived it, and in order to dissipate my apprehension, said, “ Young man, fear nothing : Solymon is gone to his country-house, where he will remain all day : so that we may converse together freely”.

Encouraged by these words, I assumed a look that redoubled the favourite’s joy. “ I am pleased with your person, (said she) and intend to soften the rigour of your slavery : I believe you worthy of the sentiments I have conceived for you ; for tho’ you are in the dress of a slave, you have a noble and gallant air that shews you are not of the vulgar. Speak freely, and tell me who you are.—I know that captives of a noble birth disguise their rank, that they may be redeemed at an easier rate ; but you have no occasion to behave in that manner with me : I should even be affronted at such a precaution, since I promise to set you at liberty. — Be sincere, therefore, and confess, that you are a young man of a good family.” “ Truly, madam, (I replied) it would be ingratitude in me to repay your generosity with dissimulation ; and since you absolutely charge me to reveal my quality, you must be satisfied. I am the son of a Spanish grandee.”—Perhaps I spoke truth : at least the sultana believed it ; and, pleased that she had thrown her eyes upon a gentleman of importance, assured me that it should not be her fault, if we did not see one another often in private.—We had a pretty long conversation, and I never saw a more engaging wowan : she understood several languages, especially the Castilian, which she spoke pretty well. When she judged it time for us to part, I went, by her order, into an ozier basket, covered over with a flowered silk, the work of her own hand. Then the two slaves, who brought me in, were called, and carried me out as a present from

the

the favourite to the dey : a thing sacred from all the men who are intrusted with the guard of the women.

Farrukhnaz and I found other means of seeing one another ; and that amiable captive inspired me with almost as much love for her, as she had for me. Our intelligence remained secret during two months ; altho' it is very difficult in a seraglio, to conceal the mysteries of love so long, from the Argus's that watch it. But an unlucky accident disconcerted our small affairs, and my fortune was entirely changed. One day, when I had been introduced to the sultana, in the body of an artificial dragon, that was made for a shew, and was conversing with her, Solyman, who, I imagined was busy in the country, interrupted us, and entered so hastily into the apartment of his favourite, that the old slave scarce had time to advertise us of his arrival. Consequently, I had no leisure to conceal myself, and therefore was the first object that presented itself to the view of the dey.

He seemed astonished at sight of me, and his eyes kindled with fury. I looked upon myself as one that touched his last moment, and already imagined myself under the torture. As for Farrukhnaz, I perceived that she was terrified indeed : but instead of owning her crime and asking pardon, she said to Solyman, " Signior, before you pronounce my sentence, deign to hear my defence : appearances, doubtless, condemn me, and I seem to have committed a piece of treason worthy of the most horrible chastisement. I have brought this young captive hither, and in order to introduce him into my apartment, have used the same artifice which I would have employed, if I had entertained a violent passion for him. Nevertheless, I take our holy prophet to witness, that notwithstanding this conduct, I am not unfaithful. I had a mind to converse with this christian slave, in order to detach him from his sect, and engage him to follow that of the believers. I have found in him such a resistance as I expected ; but however, I have conquer-

ed his prejudice, and he has promised to embrace Mahometanism."

I own; I ought to have contradicted the favourite, without any regard to the dangerous conjuncture in which I was : but being in the utmost dejection of spirit, affected with the danger in which I saw a woman whom I loved, and trembling for myself, I remained speechless and confused : I could not utter one word, and the dey, persuaded by my silence, that his mistress said nothing but the truth, was appeased. " Madam, (said he) I am willing to believe that you have not injured me, and that a desire of doing a thing agreeable to the prophet, has engaged you to hazard such a delicate action: I forgive your imprudence therefore, provided that this captive takes the turban immediately." He sent for a Marabou * that instant; I was cloathed with a Turkish dress, and did all that was required, without having power to resist. Or rather, I was ignorant of what I did, so much were my sensles disordered. How many christians are there, who would have been as base as I was, on such an occasion !

After the ceremony, I quitted the seraglio, under the name of Sidy Hali, to excercise a small employmenst bestowed upon me by Solyman. I never saw the sultana again ; but one of her eunuchs coming to me one day, brought from her a present of jewels worth two thousand sultanins of gold, with a billet, in which the lady assured me, that she would never forget my generous complaisance, in suffering myself to be made a Mahometan, in order to save her life. Truly, besides the presents I received from Farrukhanz, I obtained, thro' her canal, an employmenst more considerable than the first, and in less than seven years, became one of the richest renegadoes in the city of Algier.

* Marabous are Mahometan priests.

You may well believe that if I assisted at the prayers which the mussulmen put up in their molques, and fulfilled the other duties of their religion, it was only out of pure grimace. I preserved a determined resolution to re-enter into the bosom of the church; and for that purpose, to withdraw one day, into Spain or Italy, with the riches which I should amass. In the mean time, I lived very agreeably; was lodged in a fine house, had superb gardens, a great number of slaves, and very handsome women in my seraglio. Though the use of wine is forbid in that country, to Mahometans, they don't fail, for the most part, to drink it in private. As for my own part, I drank it without ceremony, as almost all renegadoes do. I remember I had two companions with whom I often committed a debauch in the night. One was a Jew; the other an Arabian; and both, as I imagined, honest men; so that I lived with them in the greatest familiarity. One evening I invited them to supper, and a dog, of which I was passionately fond, having died that day, we bathed his body, and buried it with all the ceremony that is observed at the funerals of the Mahometans. In so doing we had no intention to ridicule the Mussulman religion; but only to amuse ourselves and gratify a foolish whim that seized us in the middle of our debauch, to render the last duties to my dog. This action however had well nigh ruined me. Next day a man came to my houle and said, "Signior Sidy Hali, I am come hither on an important affair. The Cady* wants to speak with you: take the trouble, if you please, to go to his house immediately. An Arabian merchant, who supped with you last night, has informed him of a certain impiety committed by you, with regard to a dog which you buried. For this reason I summon you to appear this day

* The Cady is the civil magistrate in every town in Turkey.

before that judge, otherwise I give you notice that you will be proceeded against in a criminal manner." So saying he went away, leaving me like one thunder-struck with this citation. The Arabian had no cause to complain of me, and I could not comprehend the traitor's reason for playing me this trick. Nevertheless the thing was not to be neglected. I knew the Cady was a man severe in appearance, but not at all scrupulous at bottom; so I put two hundred sultanins of gold in my purse, and repaired to his house. He carried me into his closet, and said, with a stern look, "you are an impious, sacrilegious and abominable man; you have interred a dog like a mussulman: what horrid profanation! is it thus then you regard our most sacred ceremonies? and did you become a Mahometan, only to make a jest of our worship?" "Mr. Cady, (I replied) the Arabian who has made such a malicious report of me, that false friend, is an accomplice of my crime, if it be a crime to grant the honours of burial to a faithful domestic—an animal that possessed a thousand good qualities. He loved people of merit and distinction so much, that even in his last moments, as a testimony of his friendship, he has left them his whole fortune by a will, of which I am the sole executor. He bequeaths twenty crowns to one, thirty to another, and, Sir, he has not forgot you, {added I, taking out my purse} here are two hundred sultanins of gold which he charged me to give you." The Cady losing his gravity at this discourse, could not help laughing, and as we were alone, took the purse without ceremony, saying, while he dismissed me, "Go, Signior Sidy Hali, you have done well to inter with pomp and honour, a dog who had so much consideration for persons of worth."

By this I extricated myself out of this affair, which if it did not make me more wise, rendered me at least more circumspect for the future. I no longer drank with the Arabian, nor even with the Jew; but chose

for a companion at my cups, a young gentleman of Leghorn called Azarini, who was my own slave. I was not like the rest of the renegadoes, who are more cruel to christian slaves than the Turks themselves ; all my captives waited very patiently for their redemption ; and indeed I treated them so gently, that sometimes, they told me, they were more afraid of changing their master than desirous of liberty, whatever charms it has for people in a state of bondage.

One day, the dey's vessels returned with considerable prizes, bringing in more than an hundred slaves of both sexes, whom they had taken on the coast of Spain. Solyman kept but a very small number, and the rest were exposed to sale : I arrived in the market-place, and bought a Spanish girl about ten or twelve years old, who wept bitterly and seemed in despair. I was surprized to see one of her age so sensible of captivity ; and bid her, in Castilian, moderate her affliction, assuring her that she had fallen into the hands of a master who did not want humanity, tho' he wore a turban. The young creature, whose mind was still engrossed by her sorrow, did not hear what I said ; she did nothing but sob, complain of her fate, and from time to time, cry with a piteous accent, "O my mother ! why are we separated ? I should have patience were we together." In pronouncing these words, she turned her eyes towards a woman between forty and fifty years of age, who stood a few paces from her, and with a downcast look, waited in sullen silence, until somebody should purchase her. I asked the young girl, if the person she looked at was her mother. " Yes, alas ! Signior, (she replied) in the name of God, do not part us." Well, my child, (said I) if it is necessary for your consolation that you should be together, you shall soon be satisfied." At the same time, I approached the mother, in order to bid for her : but I no sooner beheld her face, than I recollect ed with all the emotion you can imagine the features, the individual countenance of Lucinda ! " Just he ven!

ven! (said I to myself) 'tis my own mother! 'tis, doubtless, she herself! As for her, whether the deep affliction occasioned by her misfortunes, made all the objects that surrounded her appear to her as enemies; or that my dress disguised me; or rather that I was much altered in twelve years, during which she had not seen me, I know not, but she did not at all remember me.

Having bought her also, I carried them both to my house, where designing to give them the pleasure of knowing who I was, "Madam, (said I to Lucinda) is it possible that my features do not strike you? Have my whiskers and turban disguised me so much, that you do not know your son Raphael?" My mother starting at these words, considered my countenance, recollecting me, and we embraced one another with great tenderness. I then embraced her daughter, who, perhaps knew no more of having a brother, than I of having a sister. "Confess (said I to my mother) that in all your theatrical pieces, you have not a recognition so original as this." "Son, (answered she sighing) I was at first rejoiced to see you again, but now my joy is converted into grief! In what a situation, alas! do I find you? My slavery gives me a thousand times less pain, than that odious dress." "In good faith! madam, (said I, interrupting her with a laugh) I admire your delicacy, which to be sure he is very commendable in an actress: why, good God! mother, you must be greatly altered, if my metamorphosis offends you so much? Instead of finding fault with my turban, look upon me rather as an actor who plays the part of a Turk, upon the stage: though I am a renegado, I am no more a muselman now, than when I was in Spain; and at bottom I feel myself still attached to my religion: when you shall know the adventures that have happened to me in this country, you will excuse my conduct. Love was my crime; and I sacrifice to that deity: I am somewhat of your disposition I assure you. There

is still another reason, (added I) which ought to moderate your displeasure in seeing me thus situated. You expected to suffer in Algier a rigorous captivity; and you find in your master, a son, tender, respectful, and rich enough to maintain you here in abundance, until we can lay hold of an occasion of returning certainly into Spain. So that you must allow that proverb to be true, which says, "It is an ill wind that blows no body good."

"Son, (said Lucinda to me) since you design to repass one day into your own country, and there abjure the religion of Mahomet, I am comforted. Thank heaven! (continued she) that I shall be able to carry back your young sister Beatrice, safe and sound into Castile." "Yes, Madam (cried I) you shall have it in your power: we will go all three together as soon as possible, and rejoin the rest of our family; for I suppose you have more marks of your fruitfulness in Spain. "No, (said my mother) I have no other children than you two; you must know that Beatrice is the fruit of lawful wedlock."—"Why (I resumed) did you give my little sister that advantage over me? How could you resolve to marry? I have heard you say an hundred times, during my childhood, that you could not forgive an handsome woman for taking a husband."—"Every season has its reason, my son, (she replied) men of the most firm resolution are apt to change; and would you have a woman be more constant! I will (added she) recount my history after you left Madrid." Then she made the following narration, which (as it is curious) I will favour you with.

"If you remember it, (said my mother) you quitted young Leganez about thirty years ago: at that time the duke Medina Celi told me, that he would come and sup with me in private one evening: he appointed the day, when I waited for that nobleman, who came accordingly, and I had the good fortune to please him. He demanded the sacrifice of all the rivals he might have: I granted his request, in hopes

of being well paid for my condescension; and my hopes were not disappointed: for, the very next day, I received from him considerable presents, which were followed by many more, during the course of our correspondence. I was afraid that I should not be able to detain a man of such high rank a long time in my fetters; and this I dreaded the more, because I knew very well, that he had escaped from celebrated beauties, whose chains he had broke almost as soon as he had bore them. Nevertheless, far from being every day less and less pleased with my favours, his raptures seemed rather to increase: in short, I had the art to amuse him, and hinder his heart, naturally inconstant, from giving way to its usual levity.

He had been attached to me already three months, and I had room to flatter myself, that his passion would be of long duration; when one of my sheepfriends and I went to an assembly, where he happened to be with his duchess, in order to hear a concert of vocal and instrumental music. We chanced to place ourselves pretty near the duchess, who was pleased to take amiss, that I should presume to appear in a place where she was, and sent a message to me by one of her women, desiring that I would immediately withdraw. I returned an insolent answer, which incensed the duchess so much, that she complained of it to her husband, who came to me in person, and said, "Retire, Lucinda; though noblemen of my rank attach themselves to such little creatures as you, they must not forget themselves altogether: if we love you more than our wives, we honour our wives more than you; and as often as you have the insolence to put yourselves in competition with them, you will always have the mortification to be treated with indignity."

Luckily for me the duke spoke this in a tone of voice so low, that not one word was overheard by the people around us. I withdrew, covered with

shame, and wept with vexation, for the affront I had received. To crown my confusion, the actors and actresses got notice of the adventure that very evening: one would think these people entertain a dæmon, who delights in reporting to one whatever happens to another. If an actor, for example, is guilty of some extravagant action in a debauch, or an actress enters into articles with a rich gallant, the company is immediately informed of the circumstance. All my comrades therefore, knew what happened at the concert, and God knows how they rejoiced at my expence. A spirit of charity, which reigns among them, usually manifests itself on these occasions. I put myself, however, above their tittle-tattle, and consoled myself for the loss of the duke de Medina Celi; for he visited me no more, and I learned a few days after, that a Carthusian nun had made a conquest of him.

When a lady belonging to the theatre has the good fortune to be in vogue, she cannot want lovers; and the passion of a grandee, though it does not last above three days, greatly enhances her price. I found myself besieged with adorers, as soon as it was known in Madrid that the duke had forsaken me. Those rivals whom I had sacrificed to him, more captivated by my charms than ever, returned in crowds, as candidates for my favour; I received homage from a thousand other hearts, and was never so much in fashion before. Of all men who courted my graces, a fat German, gentleman to the duke d'Oifuna, seemed the most eager. He had not a very amiable person, but attracted my attention by a thousand pistoles, which he had amassed in the service of his master, and which he squandered away, in order to be deemed worthy of being in the list of my happy gallants. As long as this worthy admirer, whose name was Brutandorf, had money to spend, I gave him a favourable reception: but when he was ruined, he found my door always shut against him. This proceeding of mine dispeased him, and he came to search for me at the theatre,

theatre, during the play. He found me behind the scenes, and began to reproach me for my ingratitude. I laughed in his face, at which he was enraged, and lent me a box on the ear, like a blunt German as he was : I shrieked aloud, interrupted the representation, appeared upon the stage, and addressing myself to the Duke d'Offuna, who was present with the duchess his lady, demanded justice for the German behaviour of his gentleman. The duke ordered us to go on with the play, and said he would hear the parties, when we had finished the piece. As soon as it was over, I presented myself, in a good deal of emotion, before the duke, and signified my grievance in a pathetic manner ; as for the German, he employed but two words in his defence ; he said, " that far from repenting of what he had done, he would do it again on the same provocation." Both parties being heard, the duke of Offuna said to my adversary, " Brudendorf, I dismiss you from my service ; let me never see your face again : not that I mind your having struck an actress, but am offended at your want of respect to your master and mistress, by presuming to disturb the entertainment in their presence."

This sentence I could not digest ; I was mortally piqued, because the German had not been turned away on account of his insolence to me : I imagined that such an affront put upon an actress, ought to have been as severely punished as petty treason, and I had laid my account with seeing the gentleman undergo some terrible infliction. This disagreeable event undeceived and convinced me, that the world always makes a distinction between the players and the characters they represent. I was, for this reason, disgusted with the stage, which I resolved to abandon, and go to live at a great distance from Madrid. I accordingly chose the city of Valencia for my retreat, and thither I repaired incognito, with the value of twenty thousand ducats, in jewels and cash : a fortune, as I thought, sufficient to maintain me during the rest of

my days : since I designed to lead a very retired life, I took a small house at Valencia, and had no other domestics than a maid-servant and a page, to whom I was as little known as to the whole city. I pretended to be a widow of an officer of the king's household ; and said I came to settle at Valencia, because it had the reputation of being one of the most agreeable places in Spain. I saw but very little company, and observed such a regular conduct, that I was never suspected of having been an actress. In spite of my care, however, to keep myself concealed, I attracted the notice of a gentleman, who had a country house near Paterna. He was a very well made cavalier between thirty-five and forty years of age, but withal a nobleman very much in debt ; which is no great rarity in the kingdom of Valencia, more than in other countries.

This Signior Hidalgo * finding my person to his liking, wanted to know if I could answer his purpose in other respects : for this end, he uncoupled his spies to make discoveries, and had the pleasure to learn from their report, that, besides some share of beauty, I was a widow of good fortune. He looked upon me, therefore, as a suitable match, and, in a little time, an honest old gentlewoman came to my house, and told me, from him, that being equally charmed with my beauty and virtue, he made a tender of his heart, and was ready to conduct me to the altar, as soon as I would favour him with my hand. I asked three days to deliberate upon his proposal, and inform myself of his character ; which was so engaging, that, although I was not ignorant of his situation, I easily determined to marry him in a short time after.

Don Manuel de Xercia (so was my husband called) carried me immediately to his castle, that had a very antique

* Hidalgo (in Spanish) is a gentleman literally somebody's son, in contradistinction to those who are the sons of nobody.

antique air, of which he was not a little vain. He pretended that one of his ancestors had caused it to be built; and from thence concluded, that there was not a more ancient house in Spain than that of Xercia. But this title of nobility, fair as it was, had like to have been destroyed by time: for the castle, which they were obliged to prop up in several parts, threatened immediate ruin. How happy, therefore, was Don Manuel in marrying me! more than half of my money was employed in reparations: and the rest served to put us in a condition of making a figure in the country. Behold me then (to use the expression) in a new world, changed into the nymph of a castle, and lady of a parish. Here was a metamorphosis! and I was too good an actress, not to support, with dignity, the splendor with which I was invested by my rank. I assumed lofty theatrical airs, which made the village conceive an high idea of my birth. How merry would they have been at my expence, had they known the truth of the matter! the nobility in the neighbourhood would have bestowed upon me a thousand taunts, and the peasants abated a great deal of the respect they shewed.

I had lived happily near six years with Don Manuel, when he died, leaving my affairs in great perplexity, with your sister Beatrice, then going in her fifth year. The castle, which was all the estate we had, was unluckily engaged to several creditors, the chief of whom was one Bernard Astuto, whose name seemed very well adapted to his character: he practised at Valencia the business of an attorney, which he exercised with consummate skill, having studied the law, in order to qualify himself for cheating with the greater dexterity. What a terrible creditor he was! a castle under the claws of such an attorney, is like a pigeon in the talons of a kite. Accordingly, Signior Astuto, as soon as he understood the death of my husband, did not fail to besiege the castle, which he would undoubtedly have blown up, by the mines that chicanery

began to prepare; had not my good genius interposed, and ordered it so, as that my besieger became my slave. I had the good fortune to captivate him, during an interview we had on the subject of the law-suit. I spared nothing, I own, to inspire him with a passion for me: the desire of saving my land, made me practise upon him all those languishing airs which had often succeeded so well. Notwithstanding all my art, I was afraid of being baffled by the attorney, who was so ingulphed in business, that he did not seem susceptible of an amorous impression. Nevertheless, this sullen, awkward scrawler, took more pleasure in looking at me, than I imagined. "Madam (said he) I know not how to make love: I have always applied to my profession so closely, as to neglect the methods and customs of gallantry; but, however, I am not ignorant of the essential part; and therefore, to come to the point, I assure you, that if you will give me your hand, we will burn the whole proceedings; I will bubble the other creditors, who join in the suit against you: you shall enjoy the life-rent, and your daughter the property of the land." My own interest, and that of Beatrice, did not permit me to hesitate; I accepted the proposal, and the attorney kept his promise. He turned his arms against the rest of the creditors, and secured me in the possession of my castle; and this, perhaps, was the first time of his having befriended the widow and the orphan.

I became therefore, an attorney's wife, without ceasing to be lady of the parish. But this new marriage cost me the esteem of the gentry in Valencia. The women of fashion looked upon me as one who had degenerated, and therefore would not visit me; so that I was obliged to confine myself to an acquaintance among citizens: a circumstance that gave me some uneasiness at first; because I had been, for six years, accustomed to correspond with none but ladies of distinction: but I soon consoled myself, and became acquainted with the wives of a scrivener and

two attorneyes, whose characters were pleasant enough; there was something ridiculous in their behaviour, that diverted me very much. These small gentry believed themselves ladies of some consideration. Alas! (said I, sometimes to myself, when I saw them forget themselves) this is the way of the world: every one thinks herself better than her neighbour. I imagined, that actresses were the only people who did not know themselves; but I find that citizens wives are not a whit more reasonable. I wish that by way of punishment, they were obliged to keep in their houses the pictures of their grandfathers; in good faith they would not place them in the most remarkable apartment.

After having been married four years, Signior Bernard Astuto fell sick, and died without children; so that, with what he had settled upon me at our marriage, and the money I was left in possession of, I found myself a rich widow, and had the reputation of being so. On this report, a Sicilian gentleman, whose name was Colischini, resolved to attach himself to me, in order to ruin or espouse me, for he left me the choice. He had come from Palermo, to see Spain, and after having satisfied his curiosity, waited (as he said) at Valencia, for an opportunity of reposing into Sicily. This gentleman was not more than five and twenty years of age, genteelly shaped, though small; in short, I liked his appearance. He found means to speak with me in private, and I will frankly own, that I became madly fond of him, in our first interview. On his side, the little rogue seemed quite captivated by my charms; and I believe (God forgive me) we should have married one another immediately, had the attorney's death, which was still recent, permitted me to contract a new engagement so soon: but ever since I had fallen into the taste of matrimony, I maintained the punctilio of decorum.

We agreed, therefore, to defer our marriage for some

some time, out of decency : in the mean time, Colifichini continued his addresses, and his passion, far from abating, seemed to increase daily. The poor young man was not very well provided with cash ; I perceived it, and he no longer wanted money : for, besides that I was almost twice his age, I remembered that I had lain the men under contribution in my youth ; and I looked upon what I now did, as a restitution that acquitted my conscience. We waited, as patiently as we could, for the expiration of the time prescribed by custom, for women to remain in a state of widowhood ; and then, went to the altar, where we mutually bound ourselves in the indissoluble ties of wedlock : we afterwards retired to my castle, where, I may say, we lived two years, not so much like husband and wife, as like two tender lovers. But, alas ! we were not destined to be long happy in one another : a fatal pleurisy robbed me of my dear Colifichini."

Here I interrupted my mother, crying, " How ! madam, your third husband dead too ! You must certainly be a very dangerous tenement." " What could I do, son ? (answered Lucinda) was it in my power to prolong the days that heaven had numbered ? if I have lost three husbands, I could not help it. Two of them I regretted very much : he for whom I had the least regard was the attorney ; as I married him out of interest, I easily consoled myself for his death. But (added she) to return to Colifichini, I must tell you, that a few months after his decease, having a mind to go and see, with my own eyes, a country-house near Palermo, which he had assigned to me as a jointure, in our contract of marriage, I embarked with my daughter for Sicily ; but we were taken in our passage by the vessels of the Dey of Algier, and conducted into this city. Happily for us you chanced to be on the spot, where we were put up to sale, otherwise we might have fallen into the hands of some barbarous master, who would

have

have maltreated us, and under whom we might have passed our whole life in bondage, without your knowing any thing of the matter."

Such was my mother's narration ; after which, gentlemen, I gave her the best apartment of my house, with the liberty of living as she should think proper ; a permission that she relished very much. She had contracted such a habit of being in love, from the repeated attacks of that passion, that she must absolutely have either a husband or a gallant. At first she cast her eyes on some of my slaves ; but Haly Pegelin, a Greek renegado, who came frequently to the house, soon engrossed her attention. She conceived a more violent passion for him, than ever she felt for Colifichini, and she was so much mistress of the art of pleasing, that she found the secret of charming him also. I winked at their intelligence, and thought of nothing then but my return into Spain. The day having already permitted me to fit out a vessel, to cruise and commit piracy, I was busied in making preparations ; and eight days before they were finished, said to Lucinda, " Madam, we shall depart from Algier, in a very little time, and lose sight of that place which you detest so much."

My mother grew pale at these words, and remained speechless. At which being strangely surprized ; " What do I see, madam ! (said I) what is the meaning of that consternation in your looks ? you seem to be afflicted, rather than rejoiced at what I tell you ! I thought I should have made you happy with the news of every thing's being ready for our departure. Have you no longer any desire then, of repassing into Spain ?" " None at all, son (answered my mother) I have had so much affliction in that kingdom, that I renounce it for ever." " What do I hear ! (cried I, in a transport of grief) ah ! say rather that love detaches you from it. O heavens ! what a change is here ! when you arrived in this city, every object that presented itself was odious to your eyes : but

Haly

Haly Pegelin has altered your disposition." " I don't deny it (replied Lucinda) I love that renegade, whom I design to take for my fourth husband." " What an abandoned project ! (said I, interrupting her, with horror) would you marry a musulman ; you forget that you are a christian ; or rather, you never was one but in name. Ah ! mother, what are you about to do ? you have resolved upon your own perdition, by voluntarily embracing that which I was compelled to by necessity."

I used many more arguments to dissuade her from her design ; but I harangued to no purpose : she had formed her resolution ; and, not contented with following her own wicked inclination, and quitting me to live with that renegade, she wanted to carry Beatrice along with her also ; but this I opposed. " Ah, wretched Lucinda ! (said I to her) if nothing is able to restrain you, at least abandon yourself only, to the fury that possesses your imagination ; don't drag a young innocent creature to the precipice from whence you intend to throw yourself." Lucinda went away, without making any reply, and I believed, that a remaining ray of reason enlightened and hindered her from being obstinate in demanding her daughter. But how little was I acquainted with my mother ! Two days after, one of my slaves said to me, " Signior, take care of yourself ; one of Pegelin's captives has imparted a thing to me, of which you cannot take the advantage too soon. Your mother has changed her religion, and to punish you, for having refused to let her carry off Beatrice, is resolved to inform the dey of your intended flight." I did not doubt one moment, that Lucinda was capable of doing what my slave mentioned : I had opportunities of studying the lady, and perceived, that, by the habit of acting sanguinary parts in tragedies, she was so familiarized to guilt, that she could have caused me to be burnt alive, and, I believe, would have been no

more

more affected with my death, than with the catastrophe of a dramatic performance.

Willing therefore ~~not~~ to neglect the advice of my slave, I hastened my embarkation, hired Turks, according to the custom of the corsairs of Algier, when they go on a cruise; but I hired no more than such as were necessary to keep me unsuspected, and set sail as soon as possible, with all my slaves, and my sister Beatrice. You may well believe, that I did not forget to carry off, at the same time, all my jewels and money, which might amount to the value of six thousand ducats. When we got to sea, we began by securing the Turks, whom we easily chained, because my slaves were more numerous than they: and we had such a favourable wind, that in a little time we made the coast of Italy, and arrived, without the least bad accident, in the harbour of Leghorn, where, I believe, the whole city crowded to see us come ashore. The father of my slave Azarini being among the spectators, by accident or curiosity, surveyed all the captives with great attention, as they disembarked; but though he sought among them the features of his son, he little expected to see him again. What transports and embraces were the consequence of their meeting, when they recollect ed one another !

As soon as Azarini had told his father who I was, and what brought me to Leghorn, the old man obliged me as well as Beatrice to lodge at his house. I shall pass over in silence the detail of a thousand things that I was obliged to perform, in being re-admitted into the bosom of the church; and only observe, that I abjured Mahometanism much more heartily than I had embraced it. After having entirely purged myself of the gall of Algier, I sold my vessel, and set all my slaves at liberty; as for the Turks, they were detained in prison at Leghorn, in order to be exchanged for christians. I received the best of treatment from both the Azarinis, the younger of whom

married

married my sister Beatrice, who was indeed no bad match for him, being a gentleman's daughter, and heiress of the castle of Xercia, which my mother had taken care to farm out to a rich peasant of Paterna, when she resolved upon her passage into Sicily.

Having staid some time at Leghorn, I set out for Florence, which I longed much to see : and whither I did not go without letters of recommendation. Azarini the father had friends at the grand duke's court, to whom he introduced me as a Spanish gentleman his ally : and I prefixed Don to my name, imitating in that a great many Spanish plebeians, who, when they are out of their own country, assume that title of honour without ceremony. I boldly, therefore, called myself Don Raphael ; and as I had brought from Algier a sufficiency to support my dignity, appeared at court in a splendid manner. The gentleman to whom Azarini had wrote in my favour, gave out that I was a person of quality ; so that his testimony, together with the airs I assumed, made me easily pass for a man of importance. I soon got acquainted with the principal noblemen, who presented me to the grand duke, whom I had the good fortune to please ; upon which, I bent my whole endeavour to make my court to that prince, and study his disposition. I listened attentively to what the oldest courtiers said to him ; and by their discourse discovered his inclinations. Among other things, I observed that he loved raillery, good stories, and fallies of wit. I modelled myself accordingly ; and every morning marked in my pocket-book the stories I designed for the day. I had such a number of them in my memory, that my budget might be said to have been full ; and yet, in spite of all my management, it was emptied apace, in such a manner, that I should either have been obliged to use repetition, or shew that I was at the end of my apothegms ; if my genius, fruitful in fiction, had not furnished me with abundance. But I composed tales of gallantry and humour, that were very entertaining

to the great duke ; and as it often happens with professed wits, in the morning I invented bright expressions, which I uttered as unpremeditated fallies in the afternoon.

I even elevated myself into a poet, and consecrated my muse to the praise of the prince. I freely own indeed, that my verfe was none of the best, therefore not much criticised ; but had it been better, I question if it would have been better received by the grand duke, who seemed very well satisfied with my talents ; the matter, perhaps, hindered him from finding fault. Be that as it will, this prince insensibly took such a liking to me, as gave umbrage to the courtiers. They endeavoured to discover who I was, but did not succeed. Getting notice, however, that I had been a renegade, they did not fail to inform the prince of it, in hopes of injuring my character. But this they could not accomplish ; on the contrary, the great duke, one day, obliged me to give him a faithful narration of my voyage to Algier ; I obeyed, and my adventures, which I did not at all disguise, afforded him infinite pleasure.

" Don Raphael, (said he, when I had finished the relation) I have a regard for you, and will give you a mark of it, which will not permit you to doubt of my friendship. I will make you the depository of my secrets : and to begin with an instance of my confidence, I must tell you that I am in love with the wife of one of my ministers. She is the most amiable lady of my court, but, at the same time, the most virtuous : shut up amidst her family, and solely attached to a husband whom she adores, she seems ignorant of the noise her charms make in Florence. Judge you if this must not be a difficult conquest. Nevertheless, this beauty, inaccessible as she is to lovers, has deigned, sometimes, to hear my sighs : I have found means to speak to her in private, and acquaint her with the sentiments of my heart ; but I don't flatter myself with the hope of having inspired her with mutual love ;

love: she has never given me cause to form such an agreeable idea; I don't, however, despair of pleasing her, by my assiduity, and the mysterious conduct I shall take care to observe.

"My passion for that lady (added he) is known to nobody but herself: for, instead of consulting my inclination without constraint, and acting the sovereign, I conceal the knowledge of my flame from all the world. A piece of delicacy which I think I owe to Mascarini, the husband of her I love: his zeal, attachment, services and probity oblige me to conduct myself with great secrecy and circumspection. I would not plunge a dagger into the bosom of that unhappy husband, by declaring myself the lover of his wife; but wish that he may always remain ignorant, if possible, of the flame that consumes me: for, I am persuaded that he would die of grief if he knew the confidence I now repose in you. I conceal my steps, therefore, and am resolved to make use of you, in expressing to Lucrezia all the pangs I suffer, by the constraint which she imposes upon me: you shall be the interpreter of my sentiments, and I don't at all doubt that you will acquit yourself of the commission to a miracle. Contract an acquaintance with Mascarini, endeavour to gain his friendship, insinuate yourself into his house, and procure the liberty of conversing with his wife. This is what I expect of you, and what I assure myself, you will perform with all the discretion and address that such a delicate employment requires."

I promised to do all that lay in my power, to justify the confidence he honoured me with, and contribute to the success of his flame: and soon kept my word with him; I spared nothing to please Mascarini, and accomplished my end with ease. Charmed to find his friendship courted by a man who was beloved of his prince, he met my advances half-way: his house was open to me; I had free access to his lady, and, I dare say, behaved myself so well, that

he had not the least suspicion of the negotiation entrusted to my care. 'Tis true, indeed, for an Italian, he was not much addicted to jealousy; he depended upon the virtue of Lucrezia, and shutting himself up in his closet, left me frequently alone with her. I went roundly to work, the very first opportunity; entertained the lady with the passion of the grand duke, and told her, that my sole design in coming to her house, was to talk to her of that prince. She did not seem captivated by him; and yet, I perceived that her vanity hindered her from rejecting his addresses: she took pleasure in hearing them, without feeling any inclination to answer his desires. She did not want understanding; but she was a woman; and I observed that her virtue yielded insensibly to the idea of a sovereign in her chains. In short, the prince had reason to flatter himself that, without employing the violence of a Tarquin, he would see Lucrezia subjected to his love. An accident, however, which he little expected, destroyed his hope, as you shall presently hear.

I am naturally impudent among women; having acquired that qualification, I know not whether it be good or bad, among the Turks: Lucrezia, was handsome, and I, forgetting that I was only to act the part of an ambassador, talked to her on my own score; offering my services with all the gallantry I was master of. Instead of being shocked at my audaciousness, and replying in a rage, she said, with a smile, " You must own, Don Raphael, that the grand duke has made choice of a very faithful and zealous minister, who serves him with an integrity never enough to be commended." " (said I, with the same air) don't let us examine things scrupulously; but lay aside those reflections which (I know very well) are not at all favourable to me. I abandon myself to my passion; and after all, don't believe myself the first confidant of a prince, who has betrayed his master in affairs of gallantry; for

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the great have often dangerous rivals in their messengers of pleasure." "That may be (replied Lucrecia) but as for my part, I am so high spirited, that nobody under the degree of a prince, shall ever make an impression upon my heart. Conduct yourself accordingly, (added she, growing serious) and let us change the discourse. I am willing to forget what you have said, on condition that you shall never talk to me again in the same manner; otherwise you may chance to repent it."

Although this was an advice to the reader, of which I ought to have taken the advantage, I did not leave off entertaining Mascarini's wife with my passion: I even pressed her with more ardour than ever, to make suitable returns to my tenderness, and was rash enough to take liberties. Upon which the lady, being affronted at my discourse and musulman behaviour, checked me abruptly, threatened to make the grand duke acquainted with my insolence, and assured me that she would desire him to punish me as I deserved. I was piqued, in my turn, at these menaces; my love changed into hate; and determined to be revenged upon Lucrecia, for her contempt, I went in quest of her husband, whom, after he had sworn that he would not expose me, I informed of the correspondence between his wife and the prince, not forgetting to paint her very amorous, in order to make the scene more interesting. The minister, to prevent all accidents, shut up his spouse, without any other form of process, in a secret apartment, where she was guarded by people on whom he could rely. While she was thus surrounded by spies, who hindered her from informing the grand duke of her situation, I told that prince, with a melancholy air, that he must no more think of Lucrecia; that Mascarini had, doubtless, discovered the whole affair, since he had taken it into his head to watch his wife: that I could not imagine what had alarmed his suspicion of me, for I thought I had always behaved with a good deal of

address;

address; that the lady, perhaps, had confessed the whole to her husband, in concert with whom, she had allowed herself to be locked up, in order to avoid those importunities which alarmed her virtue. The prince seemed very much afflicted at my report; I was touched with his grief, and repented more than once of what I had done; but it was too late: besides, I confess that I felt a malicious joy, when I represented to myself the condition to which I had reduced the proud woman, who had disdained my passion.

I enjoyed, with impunity, the pleasure of revenge, which is sweet to all the world, and in particular to Spaniards, when the grand duke being one day in company with five or six of his courtiers and me, said, "In what manner do you think a man ought to be punished, who has dared to abuse the confidence of his prince, and attempted to deprive him of his mistress?" "He ought (said one) to be tied to the tails of four horses, and torn to pieces." Another was of opinion, that he should be mawled to death. The least cruel of those Italians, and he whose sentence was most favourable to the delinquent, said, "That he would be satisfied with causing him to be thrown from the top of an high tower." "And what is the opinion of Don Raphael? (resumed the grand duke) I am persuaded the Spaniards are as severe as the Italians, in such conjectures."

I easily comprehended, as you may believe, that Mascalini had not kept his oath; or that his wife had found means to apprise the prince of what had passed between her and me; and my confusion appeared plain on my countenance. Nevertheless, disconcerted as I was, I answered with a resolute tone, "Sir, the Spaniards are more generous; they would pardon the confident, on such an occasion, and, by their goodness, raise in his soul an eternal regret for having betrayed them." "Well, (said the prince) I find myself capable of such generosity. I pardon the

the traitor : for I have none but myself to blame for having bestowed my confidence upon a man whom I did not know, and whom I had reason to distrust, after what I had heard of his character. Don Raphael, (added he) this is the manner in which I will avenge myself; quit my dominions immediately, and let me never see your face again." I withdrew on the instant, not so much afflicted at my disgrace, as rejoiced at coming off so cheaply; and the very next day, embarked in a vessel that sailed for Leghorn, on its return to Barcelona.

I interrupted Don Raphael in this part of his history, by saying, " For a man of understanding, methinks you committed a great blunder in neglecting to leave Florence immediately after the discovery you made to Mascarini of the prince's passion for Lucrezia ; you should have concluded, that the grand duke would soon come to the knowledge of your infidelity." " I grant it (replied the son of Lucinda) and notwithstanding the assurance which the minister gave me of not exposing me to the resentment of the prince, I proposed to disappear in a very short time.

I arrived at Barcelona (continued he) with the remainder of the wealth I had brought from Algier, the best part of which I had dissipated at Florence, in the character of the Spanish gentleman. I did not stay long in Catalonia : for, having a longing desire to revisit Madrid, the charming place of my nativity, I satisfied, as soon as possible, the desire that impelled me. When I arrived in that city, I took furnished lodgings, by accident, at a house where a lady lived, whose name was Camilla, and who, though no minor, was a very engaging creature. I take Signior Gil Blas to witness, who saw her, much about that time, at Valladolid. She had still more wit than beauty, and never had a she-adventurer better talents for decoying dupes : but she was none of those coquettes, who lay up the acknowledgments of their gallants ; when

she had pillaged a man of business, she shared his spoils with the first sharper she found to her liking.

We loved one another at first sight ; and the conformity of our manners joined us so closely, that we soon had every thing in common. Our fortunes, indeed, were not very considerable, and therefore we spent them in a very little time. Neither of us, unluckily, minded any thing but our pleasure, or made the least use of the talents we had, to live at our neighbour's expence. But misery, at last, awakened our geniuses, which pleasure had benumbed : and Camilla said to me, " My dear Raphael, let us make a diversion, my friend, and renounce a fidelity that ruins us both : you may captivate a rich widow, and I may charm some nobleman : for if we continue faithful to one another, here will be two fortunes lost." " Fair Camilla (I replied) you have anticipated me ; I was going to make the same proposal to you. I assent to your scheme my queen : yes, for the better support of our mutual flame, let us attempt advantageous conquests : the infidelities we shall commit, will turn to triumphs in the end."

This convention being made, we took the field, and made considerable motions at first, without being able to encounter what we sought. Camilla could light upon none but beaus : that is to say, gallants who had not a penny in their pockets : and I could meet with no women, but such as loved better to levy contributions than pay them. As our arts were useless in love, we had recourse to stratagems, and performed so many that our fame reached the ears of the corregidor ; and that severe judge for the devil, ordered one of his alguazils to apprehend us ; but this officer being as good-natured as the other was cruel, gave us time to quit Madrid, in consideration of a small sum which we bestowed upon him. We took the road to Valladolid, and fixed in that city, having hired a house, in which I lived with Camilla, who passed for my sister, to avoid scandal. At first, we kept our industry

duty under the rein, and began to study the ground, before we should form any enterprize.

One day, a man accosting me in the street, saluted me very civilly, saying, " Signior Don Raphael, do you know me?" I answered, " No." Upon which he resumed : " But I recollect you : I have seen you at the court of Tuscany, where I then belonged to the grand duke's guards. I quitted the service of that prince some months ago, and am come to Spain with an Italian of great finesse : we have been three weeks at Valladolid, and lodge with a Castilian and Galician, who are, without contradiction, two young fellows of honour. We live together by the work of our hands, make good cheer, and amuse ourselves like princes : if you will join us, you shall be agreeably received by my confederates : for you always seemed to me to be a gallant man, of a disposition not addicted to scruples, and a professed brother of our order."

The rogue's frankness excited mine—" Since you speak to me with so little reserve, said I to him, it is but reasonable that I should explain myself, in the same manner to you. Indeed, I am not a novice in your profession ; and if my modesty would allow me to recount my exploits, you would see that you have not judged too advantageously of my talents. But I will forbear to launch out in my own praise, and content myself with assuring you, while I accept that place in your company which is offered, that I will neglect nothing to approve myself worthy of your choice." As soon as I signified, to this ambidexter, my consent to augment the number of his comrades, he conducted me to the place where they were, and introduced me to their acquaintance. It was here that I saw, for the first time, the illustrious Ambrose de Damela. Those gentlemen examined me touching my skill in the mystery of appropriating to one's self with address, the effects of another. They wanted to know if I understood the principles of their art ; but I shewed them a great many stratagems, which they did

not

not know, and which acquired their admiration of my ability.—They were still more astonished, when, despising the dexterity of my hand, as a thing too common, I told them that I excelled in tricks which required the assistance of genius. To convince them of this I recounted the adventure of Jerome de Moyadas; and, upon the simple narration of that affair, they found me such a superior genius, that I was chosen their chief, by unanimous consent. I soon justified their choice, by an infinite number of knavish designs, which we put in practice, and of which I was, as it were, the informing soul. When we had occasion for an actress to carry on our projects, we made use of Camilla, who performed all her parts to admiration.

About that time, our brother Ambrose, being tempted to revisit his native country, set out for Gallicia, assuring us, that we might depend upon his return. He satisfied his desire; and on his way back again, going to Burgos, with an intention of striking some stroke, an inn-keeper of his acquaintance introduced him to the service of Signior Gil Blas of Santillane, with whose affairs he did not fail to make him acquainted.—Signior Gil Blas, he added, addressing himself to me, you know how we rid you of your portmanteau, in our furnished lodgings at Valladolid; and I don't doubt that you suspected Ambrose of being the chief instrument of that theft. And you was in the right: for at your arrival, he came and laid your situation before us, and we, the gentlemen undertakers, regulated ourselves accordingly. But you are ignorant of the consequences of that adventure, which I will therefore let you know.—Ambrose and I carried off your portmanteau, and mounting your mules, took the road to Madrid, without encumbering ourselves with Camilla, or the rest of our comrades, who, without doubt, were as much surprized as you, at our non-appearance next day.

On the second day, we changed our design, and instead of going to Madrid, which I had not quitted

without cause, we passed by Zeberos, and continued our route as far as Toledo. In this city, our first care was to dress ourselves like gentlemen; then giving ourselves out for two brothers of Gallicia, who travelled out of curiosity, we soon became acquainted with persons of character. As I had been so much accustomed to act the man of quality, I was easily mistaken for such; and people being usually dazzled by expence, we imposed upon every body, by the gallant treats we began to give to the ladies. Among the women whom I visited, there was one who touched my heart: I found her fairer than Camilla, and a good deal more young: I was desirous of knowing who she was, and learned that her name was Violante, and that her husband was a gentleman, who, cloyed already with her charms, pursued those of a courtesan, whom he loved. This piece of information was enough to determine me to establish Violante the sovereign lady of my affection.

It was not long before she perceived her conquest: I began to follow her every where, and commit a thousand impertinencies, to persuade her that I wanted nothing more than to console her for the infidelity of her spouse. The fair one made her reflections on the matter, which were such, that at last, I had the pleasure of knowing her approbation of my sentiments. I received from her a billet, in answer to several which I had sent to her, by one of those old matrons, who are so serviceable in Spain and Italy. The lady gave me to understand, that her husband supped every evening with his mistress, and did not come home before it was very late. That same night I went under the windows of Violante, and entered into a most tender conversation with her: after which, we agreed, at parting, to enjoy the same opportunity every night, at the same hour, without prejudice to the other acts of gallantry which we should be permitted to exercise in the day.

Hitherto Don Balthazar, the husband of my prin-

cess, came off very cheaply: but I chose to love naturally, and repaired one evening under the lady's windows, with a design to tell her, that I could live no longer, if I did enjoy a tête à tête with her, in a place more suitable to the excess of my love: an indulgence which I had not, as yet, been able to obtain. But just as I got to the place, I saw a man come into the street, who seemed to observe me: In effect, it was the husband, who returned from the courtesan earlier than usual, and who perceiving a cavalier near his house, instead of going in, walked to and fro in the street. I remained, for some time, unresolved, but at last, determined to accost Don Balthazar, whom I did not know, and of whom I was utterly unknown. "Signior cavalier (said I to him) pray leave the street free for me one night: I will do as much for you another time." "Signior (he replied) I was going to make the same request to you: I am in love with a girl, whom her brother guards like a dragon, and who lives not above twenty paces from hence; so that I wish there was nobody in the street." "There is one way (said I) of satisfying us both, without incommoding either: for (added I, shewing him his own house) the lady, whom I serve, lodges there; and let us assist one another, if either of us should be attacked." "With all my heart (he replied) I will go to my rendezvous, and we will back one another, should there be occasion."—So saying, he left me; but it was in order to observe me the better, and this the darkness of the night permitted him to do with impunity.

As for my part, I approached, in security, the balcony of Violante, who soon appeared, and we began to converse together. I did not fail to insist upon my queen's granting me a private interview in some particular place. She resisted my importunities a little, to enhance the value of the favour which I demanded; then dropping a letter, which she took out of her pocket, "Hold (said she) you will find, in this billet,

the promise of what you so earnestly desire. She afterwards withdrew, because the hour at which her husband usually returned was at hand; upon which I secured the billet, and advanced to the place where Don Balthazar said he was concerned: but he having very well perceived what I wanted with his wife, came to me, saying, " Well, signor cavalier, are you satisfied with your good fortune?" " I have cause to be so, I replied. And what have you done? has love favoured your addresses?" " Ah no! (said he) the cursed brother of the beauty whom I love is returned from a country-house, where I imagined he would stay till to-morrow; and this mischance has baulked me of the pleasure with which I flattered myself."

Don Balthazar and I made mutual protestations of friendship; and to tie the knots of it the faster, made an appointment to meet the next day, in the Great Square. After we parted, he went home, but mentioned not a word of what he knew to Violante.— Next day he repaired to the Great Square, where I arriving a moment after him, we saluted one another with demonstrations of friendship, as perfidious on one side, as sincere on the other. Then Don Balthazar made me the confidante of a feigned intrigue with the lady whom he had mentioned the preceding night: recounting a long story that he had invented, in order to engage me, in my turn, to tell him in what manner I became acquainted with Violante. I did not fail to fall into the snare, and confess all with the utmost frankness: I even shewed the letter which I had received from her, and read the contents in these words :

I Shall dine to morrow with Donna Inez: You know where she lives. 'Tis in the house of that faithful friend that I intend to give you a private interview; for I can no longer refuse that favour, which you seem to deserve.

" This

" This (said Don Balthazar) is a billet which promises you the accomplishment of your wish ; I congratulate you before-hand on the happiness that attends you."—He could not help being a little disconcerted while he said this ; but he easily concealed his trouble and confusion from me. I was so much engrossed by my hope, that I never thought of observing my confidant, who was obliged, however, to leave me, that I might not at last perceive his agitation. He ran to apprise his brother-in-law of this adventure : but I am ignorant of what passed between them : All I know of the matter is, that Don Balthazar came and knocked at the door while I was with Violante, at the house of Donna Inez ; and as soon as we learned that it was he, I escaped at a back-door before he came in. As soon as I was gone, the ladies, whom the unforeseen arrival of the husband had disconcerted, recollected themselves, and received him with such effrontery, that he suspected I was either concealed, or had made my escape. I cannot tell what he said to Donna Inez and his wife, because it never came to my knowledge.

Meanwhile, without suspecting that I was Don Balthazar's dupe, cursing him, and returned to the Great Square, where I had appointed to meet Lameila. I did not find him, however ; he had little affairs of his own to manage ; and the rogue was more fortunate than I. While I waited for him, I saw my perfidious confidante arrive, who came up to me with a gay air, and smiling, asked news of my interview with my nymph at the house of Donna Inez. " I don't know (said I) what dæmon, jealous of my pleasures, delights in thwarting them : but while I was alone with my lady, pressing her to make me happy, her husband came and knocked at the door, so that being obliged to get off as fast as I could, I retired by a back-door, cursing to hell the troublesome cuckold who broke all my measures." " I am truly sorry for it, (cried Don Balthazar, who felt a secret

joy in seeing my vexation) what an impertinent husband must he be ! I advise you to give him no quarter." Oh ! as for that (I replied) I will take your advice : and I can assure you that his honour shall make its exit this night : his wife, when I left her, bid me not be discouraged at so small a matter; but be sure to come under her window earlier than usual, for she was resolved to admit me into her house; and desired me, at all events, to come attended with two or three friends, for fear of surprize." " What a prudent lady she is ! (said he) I will, if you please, accompany you thither." " Ah, my dear friend ! (cried I, in a transport of joy, while I threw my arms around his neck) I am infinitely obliged to you." " I will do more, (he resumed) I am acquainted with a young fellow, who is another Cæsar : he shall be of the party, and then you may boldly confide in your escorte."

I did not know what acknowledgments to make to this new friend, so much was I charmed with his zeal. In short, I accepted the succour which he offered, and appointing to meet in the twilight under Violante's balcony, we parted for that time. He went to find his brother-in-law, who was the Cæsar in question ; and I took a turn till the evening with Lamela, who, (though he was surprised at the ardour with which Don Balthazar espoused my interest) distrusted him no more than I : we fell nodding into the snare, which, I own, was unpardonable in people of our experience. When I thought it was time to present myself before Violante's window, Ambrose and I appeared upon the spot, armed with good rapiers ; and there we found the lady's husband, with another man, waiting for us, without flinching. Don Balthazar accosting me, and shewing me his brother-in-law, said, " Signior, this is the cavalier whose bravery I extolled so much. Get into the house of your mistress, and let not any anxiety hinder you from enjoying the most perfect felicity."

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After some mutual compliments, I knocked at my nymph's door, which being opened by a kind of duenna, I entered, and without taking notice of what had passed behind me, advanced into a hall where Violante was. While I saluted the lady, the two traitors, who had followed me into the house, and shut the door so hastily after them, that Ambrose was left in the street, discovered themselves. You may easily imagine that we came to blows. Both of them charged me at once; but I found them work enough, and employed them in such a manner, that perhaps they repented they had not chosen a surer conveyance for their revenge. I ran the husband through the body, and his brother-in-law seeing him out of the question, got to the door, which the duenna and Violante had opened to make their escape, while we were engaged. I pursued him into the street, where I rejoined Lamela, who not being able to extract one word from the women in their flight, did not precisely know what to think of the noise he had heard. We returned to the tavern where we lodged, secured our most valuable effects, and mounting our mules, rode out of the city, without waiting for day.

Knowing very well that this affair might have bad consequences, and that a search might be made at Toledo, which we were in the right to anticipate, we went to bed at Villarubia, at an inn, where, some time after, a merchant of Toledo arrived in his way to Segorba. As we supped in his company, he recounted the tragical adventure of Violante's husband, and was so far from suspecting us to be concern'd, that we boldly ask'd of him all manner of questions about the affair. " Gentlemen (said he) just as I set out this morning, I heard of the melancholy accident. Search was made every where for Violante, and I was told that the corregidor, who is related to Don Balthazar, has resolved to spare nothing in discovering the murderers. This is all I know of the matter."

Though I was not much alarmed at the search of

the corregidor, I resolved to quit New Castile immediately : reflecting that when Violante should be found, she would confess all, and on her description of my person to the judge, people would be sent in pursuit of me. For this reason, the very next day we avoided the highway, through precaution : Lamela being luckily acquainted with three fourths of Spain, and particularly with the bye-ways through which we could securely repair into Arragon. Instead of going straight to Cuenca, we kept among the mountains adjacent to that city ; and through paths that were not unknown to my guide, arrived at a grotto which looked very much like an hermitage ; and indeed, it was the same to which you came last night, for an asylum.

While I was considering the country around, which presented to my view a most charming rural prospect ; my companion said to me, " I passed by this place six years ago, at which time, that grotto served as a retreat to an old hermit who gave me a very charitable reception ; entertaining me with a share of his provisions : I remember that he was a very holy man, and harangued me with a discourse that had almost detached me from the world : perhaps, he is still alive : I will go and see." So saying, the curious Ambrose alighted from his mule, and entered the hermitage, where having staid some minutes, he returned, calling to me, " Come hither, Don Raphael—come and see a very affecting scene."

I alighted immediately, and tying our mules to a tree, followed Lamela into the grotto, where I perceived an old anchorite, pale and dying, stretched at his full length upon a truckle bed. A white beard very bushy, covered his whole breast ; and in his hands clasped together, appeared a large twisted rosary. At the noise we made in approaching him, he opened his eyes which death had already began to close, and after having looked at us for a moment said, " Whosoever you are, my brethren, profit by

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the spectacle that now presents itself to your eyes : I have lived forty years in the world, and sixty in this solitude. Ah ! how long, at this moment, seems the time which I have bestowed on my pleasures : and on the contrary, how short does that appear which I have consecrated to penitence and devotion. Alas ! I am afraid that the austeries of brother John have not sufficiently expiated the sins of the licentiate Don Juan de Solis."

He had no sooner spoke these words than he expired, leaving us very much affected with his death. These sorts of objects always make some impression even on the greatest libertines. But we did not retain it long : we soon forgot what he had said to us, and began to take an inventory of every thing in the hermitage : an empployment not very laborious ; all his furniture consisting in what you may have observed in the grotto. Brother John was not only ill provided with furniture, but also kept a very bad larder : for all the provision we found, was a few filberts, and some crusts of barley bread, so hard as to be, in all appearance, proof against the gums of the holy man. I say his gums ; because we observed, that he had lost all his teeth. All that this solitary habitation contained, and all that we beheld, made us regard the good anchorite as a perfect saint. We were shocked, indeed, at one thing : we opened a paper folded in form of a letter, which he had laid upon the table, and in which, he begged that the person who should read it, would carry his rosary and sandals to the bishop of Cuenca. We did not know with what intention this new father of the desert could desire to make such a present to his bishop. This seemed an outrage against humility, and the behaviour of a man who wanted to set up for canonization. And perhaps, there was nothing in it, but pure simplicity : for I don't pretend to decide the matter.

While we discoursed together on this subject, a pleasant thought came into Lamela's head. " Let us

stay (said he) in this hermitage, and disguise ourselves like anchorites, having first buried brother John. You shall pass for him; and under the name of brother Anthony, I will go a-begging in the neighbouring towns and villages. Besides, our being secure from the enquiries of the corregidor (for I don't believe he will think of searching for us here) I have some good acquaintance at Cuenca, which we may cultivate." I approved of this extravagant proposal, not so much for Ambrose's reasons, as out of pure whim, or a desire of acting a part in a play. About thirty or forty paces from the grotto, we dug a grave, in which we modestly interred the old anchorite, after having stript him of his cloaths; that is, a simple robe tied about his middle with a leathern girdle: we likewise cut off his beard, to make a false one for me; and in short, after having perform'd his funerals, took possession of the hermitage.

We fared poorly the first day, being obliged to live on the provision of the defunct; but next morning, before day, Lamela set out in order to sell the two mules at Toralva, and returned in the evening loaded with victuals, and other things which he had purchased. He brought every thing that was necessary for our transformation: he made for himself a russet gown, and a little red beard of horse hair, which he fixed so artificially to his ears, that one would have sworn it was the natural produce of his chin. There is not a more dexterous young fellow in the world than he; who likewise weaved the beard of brother John, which he applied to my face, and my brown woollen cap served to cover the artifice; so that there was nothing wanting to our disguise. We found each other so pleasantly equipped, that we could not, without laughing, behold ourselves in this dress, which truly was not very suitable to our real characters. Together with brother John's robe, I wore his rosary and sandals, of which I made no scruple to deprive the bishop of Cuenca.

We had been already three days in the hermitage, without seeing a soul appear; but on the fourth two peasants entered the grotto, bringing bread, cheese, and onions to the defunct, whom they still thought alive. As soon as I perceived them, I threw myself on my bed, and it was no difficult matter to deceive them: for, besides that there was not light enough to enable them to distinguish my features, I imitated as well as I could the voice of brother John, whose last words I had heard; and they had no suspicion of the cheat: they seemed only surprized to meet another hermit there; which when Lamela perceived, he said, with an hypocritical air, " My brethren, be not surprized to see me in this solitude: I have quitted an hermitage I possessed in Arragon, to come hither and attend the venerable and discreet brother John, who in his extreme old age has occasion for a comrade who can provide for his necessities." The peasants gave infinite praise to the charity of Ambrose, and expressed great joy, in being able to boast of having two holy personages in their country.

Lamela, with a large havrefack, which he had not forgot to purchase, went a-begging for the first time in the city of Cuenca, which is but a small league from the hermitage. With a devout appearance, which he had received from nature, and the art of making advantage of it, which he possessed in a supreme degree, he did not fail to extort alms from charitable people, with whose liberalities he filled his havrefack. " Mr. Ambrose, said I to him at his return, I congratulate you upon your happy talent of melting the souls of christians. Egad! one would think you had been a-begging brother among the capuchins." " I have done something else, answered he, than fill my knapsack: you must know I have discovered a certain nymph called Barba, whom I formerly loved, and whom I have found strangely altered. She, like us, has turned devotee, and lives with two or three sisters of the same class, who edify

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the world in public, and in private lead scandalous lives." As she did not know me at first, "How! Madam Barba, said I, is it possible that you do not recollect one of your old friends, your admirer Ambrose?"—"By my faith! Signior de Lamela, cried she, I should never have expected to see you again in the habit you wear! By what adventure are you become hermit?" "I cannot tell you at present, I replied; the detail is somewhat long: but I will come back to-morrow to gratify your curiosity, and bring along with me my companion brother John." "Brother John!" said she, interrupting me, what! the good anchorite who lives in the hermitage near this city? Sure you joke; they say he is more than an hundred years old." "It is true, said I to her, that he was once of that age; but he has grown a great deal younger within these few days: and is at present no older than I." "Well, let him come along with you, replied Barba, I see there is some mystery in the case."

We did not fail the next day, as soon as it was dark, to go to the house of those bigots, who had prepared a sumptuous entertainment for our reception. We immediately took off our beards and hermits dress, and without ceremony told them who we were. On their side, for fear of being indebted to us for our frankness, they shewed what false devotees are capable of, when they banish grimace. We spent almost all the night at table, and did not retire to our grotto till the dawn.—We returned thither again in a very short time; or rather, did the same thing, almost every day, during three months; in which time, we spent two thirds of our money with these nymphs: but one being suspicious of our characters, discovered the whole, and has informed justice against us, which this day intended to visit the hermitage, and secure our person. Yesterday Ambrose, while he was begging at Cuenca, met one of our sisters, who gave him a note, saying, "One of my friends wrote

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this letter to me, which I was going to send to you by an express : shew it to brother John, and take your measures accordingly." It was this billet, gentlemen, which Lamela delivered to me in your presence, and which has made us quit so suddenly our solitary habitation.

C H A P . II .

The council which Don Raphael held with his hearers, and the adventures which happened to them when they designed to quit the wood.

WHEN Don Raphael had ended his narration which I thought a little tedious, Don Alphonso was so polite as to say, it had diverted him very much. Then Signior Ambrose opened, and addressing himself to his fellow adventurer, "Don Raphael, said he, consider that the sun is set ; it will be proper, methinks, to deliberate on what we are to do." " You are in the right, replied his comrade, we must determine upon the place to which we go next." " It is my opinion, resumed Lamela, that we should set forward without loss of time, reach Requena this night, and to-morrow enter the kingdom of Valencia, where we will give the rein to our industry, and, I foresee, perform some successful strokes. His confederate, who, on that subject, believed his presage infallible, assented to his opinion. As for Don Alphonso and me, leaving ourselves to the conduct of these honest people, we waited in silence the result of the conference.

It being therefore resolved that we should take the road to Requena, we began to prepare ourselves for the journey ; we made another meal like that in the morning ; and loading the horse with the bottle and the remains of our provisions, the approach of night lent us that darkness which we needed for our more secure travelling, and we pushed forward to get out of the wood. But we had not gone an hundred yards,

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when we discovered among the trees a light that made us very uneasy. "What is the meaning of that, said Don Raphael, perhaps the ferrets of justice having pursued us from Cuenca, understand that we are in this forest, and are come hither to search?" "I don't believe that, said Ambrose; these are rather travellers, who being surprized by the night, have come into this wood to wait for day. But, added he, I may be mistaken. I will go and reconnoitre while you stay here, and I will be back in a moment." So saying, he advanced towards the light, which was not far off, and approached it softly. Pushing gently by the leaves and boughs that were in his way, and peeping with all the attention which the thing seemed to deserve, he saw on the grass, round a candle that stuck burning in a lump of clay, four men sitting, who had just dispatched a pie, and emptied a pretty large leather bottle, which they embraced in their turns. He likewise perceived, at some distance from them, a lady and gentleman tied to trees; and a little farther, a chaise, with two mules richly caparisoned. He guessed at once, that the men were robbers; and their discourse, which he overheard, assured him that he was not mistaken in his conjecture. The four banditti expressed an equal desire of possessing the lady who had fallen into their hands, and talked of casting lots for her. Lamela having fully informed himself of the matter, rejoined us, and made a faithful report of what he had seen and heard.

Upon which, Alphonso said, "Gentlemen, that lady and cavalier whom the robbers have bound to trees, are perhaps persons of the first quality; and shall we suffer them to fall victims to the barbarity and brutality of thieves? Take my advice, let us attack these banditti, and put them all to death." "With all my heart, said Don Raphael, I am as ready to do a good as a bad action." Ambrose, on his part, signified his willingness to lend a hand to such a laudable enterprize, for which, said he, I foresee we

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shall be well recompensed.—I dare likewise affirm, that on this occasion I was not at all afraid of the danger ; and that no knight-errant ever shewed more readiness to succour damsels in distress. But, not to conceal the truth, the danger was not great ; for Lamela having reported, that the arms of the robbers were all in a heap at the distance of ten or twelve paces from them, it was no difficult matter for us to execute our design. We tied our horse to a tree, and approached, as gently as possible, the place, where they were talking with great warmth ; and making a noise that helped us to surprize them, we made ourselves masters of their arms, before we were discovered : then firing a volley upon them, stretched them all breathless on the spot.

During this execution the light going out, we remained in darkness ; but for all that, did not delay to untie the man and woman, who were so much engrossed by their fear, that they had not power to thank us for what we had done in their behalf. 'Tis true, indeed, they did not as yet know whether to look upon us as their deliverers, or as a new troop of banditti, who had not rescued them from the others with any intention to use them better. But we encouraged them, by protesting that we would conduct them to an inn, which Ambrose affirmed was not more than half a league from thence ; and that they might take all necessary precautions for their security, in going whither their affairs called them. After this assurance, with which they seemed very well satisfied, we replaced them in their chaise, and brought them out of the wood, leading the mules by the bridle. Our anchorites afterwards examined the pockets of the vanquished, took care of Don Alphonso's horse, secured those that belonged to the thieves, which we found tied to trees near the field of battle ; and carrying them all off, followed brother Antony, who mounted one of the mules, in order to guide the chaise to the inn ; at which, however, we did not arrive

rive in less time than two hours, although he had assured us that it was not far from the wood.

Every body in the house being a-bed, we knocked loudly at the door; upon which the landlord and his wife got up in a hurry, and were not sorry to see their rest interrupted by the arrival of an equipage, which they thought would have spent more money than it did. The whole inn was lighted in a moment: Don Alphonso and the illustrious son of Lucinda offered their hands to help the cavalier and lady out of the chaise, and even served them as ushers to the chamber whither the landlord conducted them. There a great many compliments passed; and we were not a little astonished when we understood that it was the Count de Polan himself and his daughter Seraphina whom we had delivered. It is impossible to describe the surprize of that lady, as well as Don Alphonso, when they recollect ed each other. The count took no notice of it, so much was he otherwise engrossed, in recounting to us in what manner the robbers had attacked him; and how they had seized his daughter and him, after having killed his position, page and valet de chambre: He ended with telling us, that he had a deep sense of the obligation he lay under to us; and if we would come to him at Toledo, where he should be in a month, we should see whether or not he was ungrateful.

Nor did the daughter of this nobleman forget to thank us for her happy deliverance: and as Raphael and I imagined that we should please Don Alphonso by giving him an opportunity of talking a moment in private with that young widow, we gratified his desire, by amusing the Count de Polan. " Fair Seraphina (said Alphonso to the lady, in a low voice) I will no longer complain of the fate that compels me to live like a man banished from civil society, since I have been so happy as to contribute to the important service which you have received." " How! (answered she, sighing) is it you who have saved my life and honour?

honour? Is it to you that my father and I are so much indebted! Ah! Don Alphonso! why did you kill my brother?" She said no more; but he easily perceived by these words, and the tone in which they were pronounced, that if he was violently in love with Seraphina, she was no less enamoured of him.

B O O K VI.

C H A P. I.

The conduct of Gil Blas and his companions after they quitted the Count de Polan. The important project which Ambrose formed, and the manner in which it was executed.

THE count de Polan having spent one half of the night in thanking and assuring us, that we might depend upon his gratitude, called the landlord, in order to consult with him about the means of getting in safety to Tunis, whither he designed to go. We left that nobleman to make his measures accordingly; and departing from the inn, followed the road that Lamela pleased to chuse.

After having travelled two hours, day surprized us near Campelio; upon which, we immediately betook ourselves to the mountains, which are between that village and Requena, and there passed the day in reposing ourselves, and counting our finances, which were a good deal increased by the money of the robbers; for above three hundred pistoles were found in their pockets. As soon as it was dark we set forward again, and next morning entered the kingdom of Valencia. We retired to the first wood that presented itself to our view; and pushing a good way in-

to it, arrived at a place thro' which a rivulet of crystalline waters gently glided in its way to join the waters of Guadalaviar *. The shade projected by the trees, and the grass which the place afforded in abundance to our horses, would have determined us to halt here, even if we had not been resolved upon it before. We alighted therefore, and prepared to pass the day very agreeably; but when we went to breakfast, found very little provision left. We began to want bread, and our bottle was become a body without a soul. "Gentlemen, said Ambrose, the most charming retreats are but disagreeable without Bacchus and Ceres; our provision must be renewed: I will for that purpose go to Xelva, an handsome town not above two leagues from hence; so that the journey will soon be finished." So saying, he fixed the bottle and havrefack on one of the horses, and mounting atop of them, went out of the wood with a dispatch that promised a speedy return.

He did not come back, however, so soon as we expected: more than half of the day elapsed, and night was ready to cover the trees with her footy wings, when we beheld our purveyor, whose stay had begun to give us some uneasiness. He exceeded our expectation by the quantity of things with which he returned loaded. He brought not only the leatheren bottle filled with excellent wine, and the knapsack crammed with bread and all sorts of venison, but also a great bundle of cloth, which we observed with a good deal of attention. He perceived our admiration, and said with a smile, "I defy Don Raphael, and all the world together, to guess why I have purchased these things." Saying these words, he loosed the bundle,

* Guadalaviar, a river of Spain, taking its rise near the source of the Tagus, on the confines of Arragon and New Castile, traverses the first of these kingdoms, enters Valencia, waters the capital, and discharges itself into the gulph of that name.

G I L B L A S.

to shew the particulars of what we had observed in the gros. He displayed a cloak, and very long black robe, two doublets with their hose ; one of those inkhorns which are composed of two pieces tied together by a string, the horn of which is separated from the pen-case ; a quire of fine white paper, and a padlock with a large seal and green wax ; and when he had exhibited his whole purchase, Don Raphael said to him in a jocular way, “ Egad, Mr. Ambrose, it must be confessed you have made a fine bargain—What use, if you please, do you intend to make of it ? ” An admirable one, replied Lamela ; all these things have cost me but ten doubloons ; and I am persuaded that they will bring us in more than five hundred : you may depend upon it, I am none of those who encumber themselves with useless effects ; and to convince you that I did not buy all this like a fool, I will communicate the project I have formed.

“ Having furnished myself with bread, added he, I went into a cook’s shop, where I ordered six partridges, as many pullets and young rabbits, to be put to the fire ; and while they were doing a man came into the shop in a rage, and loudly complaining of the behaviour of a merchant in town, said to the cook, “ By St. Jago ! Samuel Simon is the most ridiculous merchant in Xelva ; he has affronted me in open shop ; the covetous wretch would not give me credit for six eils of cloth, though he knows very well that I am a responsible tradesman, and that he can lose nothing by me. Is not he a strange animal ? He sells willingly on credit to people of quality, and had rather venture with them, than oblige an honest-citizen, without any risk. Was there ever such madness ? Damnèl Jew ! would he were taken in. My wish will be one day accomplished. There are merchants enough of my opinion.”

Hearing the tradesman speak in this manner, and say a great many other things of the same nature, I had a certain forewarning that I should cheat this Samuel

Samuel Simon. "Friend, said I to the man who complained, what is the character of this person whom you mentioned?" "A very bad one, answered he hastily, I assure you he is a rank usurer, though he affects the manners of a benevolent man. He was a Jew, and turned Catholic; but in his heart he is still as much a Jew as ever Pilate was: for they say he abjured for interest."

I lent an attentive ear to all the discourse of the tradesman; and did not fail, when I came out of the cook's shop, to inquire for Samuel Simon's house. A person shewed it to me; I surveyed his shop, examined every thing; and imagination, ready at a call, sketched out a stratagem which I digested, and which appeared worthy of the valet of Signior Gil Blas. I went to a broker's where I bought these cloaths; one suit for acting an inquisitor, another to represent a scrivener, and the third for playing the part of an alguazil.

"Ah, my dear Ambrose! (cried Don Raphael, interrupting him, in a transport of joy) what a wonderful idea! what a glorious plan! I am jealous of the invention, and would willingly give up the greatest strokes of my life, to be thought the author of such a happy scheme! Yes, Lamela (added he) I see all the richness of thy design, the execution of which ought to give thee no uneasiness. Thou hast occasion for two good actors to second thee, and they are already found. Thou, who hast the air of a devotee, will act the inquisitor very well; I will represent the secretary, and Signior Gil Blas (if he pleases) shall play the part of an alguazil: thus (continued he) are the cues distributed: to-morrow we will act the piece; and I'll answer for its success, unless some of those unlucky accidents happen, which confound the best concerted designs.

I conceived as yet but very confusedly the project which Don Raphael liked so much; but the whole was explained to me at supper, and the trick seemed ingenious

genious. After having dispatched part of our venison, and made our leathern bottle undergo a copious evacuation, we stretched ourselves upon the grafts ; and were asleep in a very short time. "Get up, get up, (cried Signior Ambrose, at day-break) people who have great enterprizes to execute, ought not to be lazy." "Deuce take you, Mr. Inquisitor, (said Don Raphael, waking) how alert you are ! that bodes no good to Mr. Simon." "I grant it, (replied Lamela) and will moreover tell you, I dreamed this night, that I pluckt the hair from his beard : Is not that a villainous dream for him, Mr. Secretary ?" These jokes were followed by a thousand more, which put us all in good humour : we made a cheerful breakfast, and then prepared for acting our several parts. Ambrose put on the long gown and cloak, which gave him all the air of a commissary of the holy office : Don Raphael and I dressed ourselves likewise, so as to bear a pretty good resemblance to a secretary and alguazil. We employed a good deal of time in disguising ourselves ; and it was past two o'clock in the afternoon, when we quitted the wood, and set out for Xelva. 'Tis true, indeed, we were in no hurry, as our comedy would not begin before the twilight : we therefore went at a very slow pace, and stopping at the city-gate, waited there till night.

As soon as it was dark, we left our horses in this place to the care of Don Alphonso, who was very glad that he had no other part to perform. Don Raphael, Ambrose, and I, went immediately into a publican's in the neighbourhood : and Mr. Inquisitor going foremost, said to the landlord with great gravity, "Master, I want to talk with you in private" The landlord carried us into a parlour, where Lamela finding him alone with us, said, "I am commissary of the holy office, come hither upon a very important affair." At these words the publican grew pale, and replied with a faltering voice, that he hoped he had given no cause of complaint to the holy inqui-

inquisition ; " Therefore (replied Ambrose) it has no intention to give you any trouble : God forbid that, too prompt to punish, it should confound innocence with guilt ; it is severe, but always just : in a word, one must deserve its chastisements before he feels them. It was not you who brought me to Xelva, but a certain merchant called Samuel Simon, of whom we have received a very bad report, it is said that he is still a Jew, and embraced christianity through motives purely carnal. I ordet you therefore, in the name of the holy office, to tell me what you know of that man. Beware of excusing him, on account of his being your neighbour, and perhaps your friend ; for I declare, if I perceive in your evidence the least relvere, you yourself are a lost man. Come, secretary (added he, turning to Raphael) do your duty."

Mr. Secretary, who already had his paper and ink-horn in his hand, sat down at a table, and prepared, with the most serious air in the world, to write the deposition of the landlord ; who, on his part, protested that he would not betray the truth. " Well then, (said the commissary inquisitor to him) let us begin ; answer only to my questions ; I ask no more. " Do you see Samuel Simon frequent the church ? " " 'Tis what I have not observed (said the publican) I don't remember to have seen him at church." " Good ! (cried the inquisitor.) Write that he is never seen at church." " I don't say so, Mr. Commissary (replied the landlord) I only say, that I never saw him there : he may be in the same church with me, though I don't perceive him." " Fiend, (said Lamela) you forget that you must not, in your examination, excuse Samuel Simon : I have told you the consequences of it. You must mention only those things that are against him, and not one word in his favour." " If that be the case, Signior Licentiate, (resumed the landlord) you can't reap much from my deposition ; I am not acquainted with the merchant in question ; therefore can say neither good nor ill of him :

him : but if you want to know how he lives in his own family, I will go and call Gaspard his 'prentice, whom you may interrogate : he comes here sometimes to make merry with his friends ; and such a tongue ! he will discover the whole life and conversation of his master, and I warrant it, find employment enough for your secretary."

" I like your frankness, (said Ambrose) and you shew your zeal for the holy office, by informing me of a man acquainted with the morals of Simon. I will report you to the inquisition. Make haste, then, (continued he) and bring hither that same Gaspard, whom you mention. But do things discreetly, that his master may have no suspicion of what passes." The publican acquitted himself of his commission with great secrecy and diligence, and brought along with him the merchant's 'prentice, who was just such a very talkative young fellow as we wanted. " Welcome, child, (said Lamela to him) you see, in me, an inquisitor, nominated by the holy office, to take informations against Samuel Simon, who is accused of Judaism. You live with him, and, of consequence, are witness to the greatest part of his behaviour. I believe it is unnecessary to advertise you of the obligation you are under to declare all that you know of him, when I order you to do so, in the name of the holy inquisition." " Signior Licentiate, (replied the young man) I am very ready to satisfy you on that head, without being commanded in the name of the holy office. If my master was to take me for his text, I am persuaded that he would not spare me ; I will therefore deal as plainly with him, and tell you, in the first place, that he is a close hunk, whose true sentiments it is impossible to discover : one who affects all the exteriors of a holy man, but has not one scruple of virtue at bottom. He goes every evening to the house of a little Abigail." " I am glad to hear that, (said Ambrose, interrupting him) and I see, by what you say, that he is a man of bad morals : but,

answer precisely to the questions I am going to ask, I am particularly enjoined to know, what are his sentiments with respect to religion. Tell me, do you eat pork in your house?" "I don't think (replied Gaspard) that we have eat of it twice, during the whole year that I have lived with him." "Very well, (resumed master Inquisitor :) write, secretary, that pork is never eaten in the house of Samuel Simon. But, to make amends for that, (continued he) you, doubtless, eat lamb sometimes." "Yes, sometimes, (replied the 'prentice) we had some, for example, last Easter." "A lucky epocha! (cried the commissary) write, secretary, that Simon keeps the passover. This goes on excellently well, and methinks, we have received good intelligence.

Besides, you must tell me, friend, (added Lamela) if you have never seen your master cares little children." "A thousand times, (replied Gaspard) when he sees little boys pass by his shop, if they are at all handsome, he stops and fondles them." "Write, master Secretary, (said the inquisitor, interrupting him) that Samuel Simon is violently suspected of decoying Christian children into his house, in order to cut their throats. A fine proselyte indeed! Oh, ho! Mr. Simon, you shall have to do with the holy office, take my word for it; you must not imagine that you will be allowed to make your barbarous sacrifices with impunity. Courage, zealous Gaspard, (said he to the 'prentice) declare all that you know of the master; and give us to understand, that this false catholic is more attached than ever to the Jewish customs and ceremonies. Does not he spend one day of the week in total inaction?" "No, answered Gaspard, I have not observed that: I only perceive that on some days he shuts himself up in his closet, where he remains a long time." "Ah, ha! cried the commissary, he keeps the sabbath, as sure as I am an inquisitor. Mark, Secretary, mark that he religiously observes the fast of the Sabbath. Ah! the abominable wretch! I have only

only one thing more to ask. Does not he speak also of Jerusalem?" "Very often, replied the young man; he relates to us the history of the Jews, and in what manner the temple of Jerusalem was destroyed." "Right," said Ambrose, master Secretary, let not this piece of intelligence escape you: write, in large characters, that Samuel Simon breathes nothing but the restoration of the temple; and that he meditates night and day the re-establishment of his nation. I do not want to know any more; therefore it is needless to ask any other questions. What the trusty Gaspard hath depos'd is enough to bring a whole synagogue to the stake."

Master Commissary of the holy office having interrogated the apprentice in this manner, told him he might retire: but ordered him, in the name of the holy inquisition, to conceal from his master every tittle of what had passed. Gaspard, having promised to obey, took his leave; and we did not tarry long after he went out, but leaving the public house, as gravely as we had entered, went and knocked at the door of Samuel Simon, who opened it with his own hand; and if he was astonished to see three such figures as we were, he was much more so, when Lamela, being spokesman, said to him, with an imperious tone, "Mr. Samuel, I command you, in the name of the holy inquisition, of which I have the honour to be commissary, to deliver into my hand, this instant, the key of your closet: I want to see if I cannot find something to justify the informations which have been presented to us against you."

The merchant, confounded at these words, reeled two steps backward, as if he had received a blow on the stomach. Far from suspecting us of any trick, he believed implicitly, that some secret enemy wanted to subject him to the suspicion of the holy office; perhaps too, knowing himself to be no good catholic, he had cause to be afraid of an information. Be that as it will, I never saw a man more disconcerted: he

obeyed without resistance, and opened his closet, with all the respect that a man could shew, who is in terror of the inquisition. "At least, said Ambrose while he went in, at least you receive the orders of the holy office without contumacy. But, added he, retire into another room, and leave me at liberty to perform my function." Samuel was as obedient to this order as to the first: he remained in his shop, while we three entered his closet, and began to search for his cash, which we easily found; for it was in an coffer, and in much greater quantity than we could carry off, consisting of a great number of bags piled upon one another; but the whole in silver. We should have liked gold better: but things being as they were, we were fain to accommodate ourselves to necessity, and fill our pockets with ducats. We stuffed our breeches with them, and crammed them into every other part which we judged proper to conceal them. In short, we were heavy laden, though our cargo did not appear; and this was owing to the address of Ambrose and Don Raphael, who, by their behaviour on this occasion, let me see that there is nothing like one's being master of his trade.

After having done our business so successfully, we came out of the closet; and, for a reason that the reader will easily guess, master Inquisitor took out his padlock, and fixed it to the door with his own hand, then applying the seal, said to Simon, "Master Samuel, I forbid you, in the name of the holy inquisition, to touch this padlock, as well as the seal, which you are bound to respect, since it is the true seal of the holy office. I will return at the same hour to-morrow, in order to take it off, and bring further orders for you." So saying, he made him open the street-door, through which we joyfully passed, one after another. When we had gone about fifty yards, we began to walk with such speed and nimbleness, that we had scarce touched the ground, notwithstanding the burthens which we carried. We soon got out

of town, and remounting our horses, pushed towards Segorba, giving thanks to the god Mercury, for such an happy event.

C H A P. II.

The resolution which Don Alphonso and Gil Blas formed after this adventure.

WE travelled all night, according to our laudable custom, and found ourselves at break of day, near a little village two leagues from Segorba. As we were all fatigued, we willingly quitted the highway, to get among some willows, which we perceived at the bottom of a little hill, ten or twelve hundred paces from the village, in which we did not think proper to stop. We found that the willows yielded an agreeable shade, being watered by a small rivulet; and the place suiting our taste, we resolved to spend the day in it. Alighting, therefore, we unbridled our horses to let them feed, and lay down upon the grass, where we took a little repose. We then emptied our knapsack and leathern bottle, and having made a plentiful breakfast, counted all the money which we had taken from Samuel Simon, and which amounted to three thousand ducats; so that, with this sum, and what we had before, we might have boasted of having a pretty good stock.

As it was necessary for some of us to go and buy provision, Ambrose and Don Raphael, having quitted their dress of inquisitor and secretary, said that they would take that charge upon themselves; that the adventure at Xelva had only whetted their appetite; that they longed to be at Segorba, to see if some occasion would not offer, of striking a new stroke. " You have nothing to do (added the son of Lucinda) but wait for us under these willows: we will not tarry, but rejoin you in a very short time." " Signior Don Raphael (cried I, laughing) bid us rather wait for you till doomsday; if you leave us now, I believe we

need not expect to see you sooner." "We are affronted by your suspicion, (replied Signior Ambrose) but we deserve it at your hands: your distrust is excusable, after what we did at Valladolid; and we cannot blame you for thinking that we will make no more scruple of forsaking you, than of abandoning our comrades in that city; but, however, you are mistaken; the confederates, from whose company we withdrew, were persons of very bad characters, and their society began to grow insupportable. We must do justice to people of our profession, by affirming that there are no associates in civil life, less divided by interest than they: but when there is not a conformity of inclinations among them, their good understanding may be broke, as well as that of the rest of mankind. Wherefore, Signior Gil Blas, (added Lamela) we beg that you and Don Alphonso will have a little more confidence in us: and let not the desire of Don Raphael and me go to Segorba, give you the least uneasiness."

"It is an easy matter (said the son of Lucinda) to rid them of all cause of anxiety: let them remain masters of the cash, and then they will have, in their own hands, good security for our return. You see, Signior Gil Blas (added he) that we come to the point at once. You shall have pledges in your hands; and I can assure you, that Ambrose and I will set out, without the least apprehension of your giving us the slip. After such a certain mark of our fidelity, won't you trust entirely to our promise?" "Yes, gentlemen (said I) and you may now do what you please." They departed immediately with the leatheren bottle and knapsack, leaving me under the willows with Don Alphonso, who, after they were gone, said to me, "Signior Gil Blas, I must disclose my sentiments to you. I upbraid myself with having had the complaisance to come so far with two sharpers: you cannot imagine how often I have repented of this my conduct. Yesterday, while I took care of the horses, I made a thousand

thousand mortifying reflections: I considered, that it ill became a young man, who has principles of honour, to live with such wicked wretches as Don Raphael and Lamela; that if unluckily, one day, which may not be far off, a trick should miscarry, by which we shall fall into hands of justice, I shall be shamefully punished with them as a thief, and undergo the most infamous chastisement. These images incessantly occur to my fancy; and I own I have resolved, that I may no longer be an accomplice of their misdemeanours, to separate from them for ever. I don't believe (continued he) that you will disapprove of my design."

" No, I'll assure you, (answered I) though you have seen me act the part of an alguazil, in the comedy of Samuel Simon, don't imagine that these sorts of pieces are to my taste. I take heaven to witness, that while I played such a fine part, I said within myself, In faith, Mr. Gil Blas, if justice should now come and seize you by the collar, you would richly deserve the salary which she would bestow. I feel myself, therefore, no more disposed than you, Signior Don Alphonso, to remain longer in such good company; and if you will give me leave, I will accompany you. When the gentlemen return, we will demand our share of the finances, and to-morrow morning, or this very night, bid them an eternal adieu."

The beautiful Seraphina's lover approved of my proposal: " Let us (said he) get into Valencia, and embark for Italy, where we may engage in the Venetian service. Is it not better to carry arms, than lead this base guilty life? We shall even be in a condition to make a pretty good figure with the money which we have: not that I can use such ill-gotten wealth without remorse; but besides that I am compelled by necessity, if ever I make the least fortune in war, I swear that I will indemnify Samuel Simon." I assured Don Alphonso, that I entertained the same sentiments; and, in short, we resolved to leave our comrades next morning before day. We had

had not the last temptation to profit by their absence, that is, to decamp immediately with the cash: the confidence they had shewn, in leaving us masters of the money, did not permit us to harbour such a thought.

Ambrose and Don Raphael returned from Segorba in the evening; and the first thing they told us was, that their journey had been prosperous; that they had laid the foundation of a stratagem, which in all likelihood, would be more advantageous than the last. Accordingly, the son of Lucinda was going to inform us of the particulars, when Don Alphonso declared his resolution to leave them; and let them know that I had the same intention. They used all their endeavours in vain, to engage us to accompany them in their expeditions; for we took leave of them next day, after having made an equal partition of the money, and proceeded on our way to Valencia.

C H A P. III.

After what disagreeable incident Don Alphonso found his wishes fulfilled; and by what adventure Gil Blas, of a sudden, saw himself in a happy situation.

WE pushed forward cheerfully, as far as Bunol, where unfortunately being obliged to halt, Don Alphonso fell sick of a high fever, with violent paroxysms, which made me afraid of his life. Luckily, there was no physician in the place, and I was quit for my fear: he was out of danger at the end of three days, and my care helped to re-establish his health. He shewed himself very sensible of what I had done for him; and as we felt a reciprocal kindness for one another, we swore an eternal friendship.

We betook ourselves again to the road, still resolv'd, when we should arrive at Valencia, to take the first opportunity of a passage into Italy. But heaven disposed of us otherwise. Seeing a number of peasants of both sexes, dancing in a circle, and making merry,

merry, before the gate of a fine castle, we approached to behold their mirth; and Don Alphonso expected nothing less than the surprize with which he was seized all of a sudden. He perceived the Baron de Steinbach, who no sooner knew him again, than he ran to him with open arms, saying, in a transport of joy, " Ah, Don Alphonso! is it you? what an agreeable rencounter is this! while enquiry is made after you, all over the kingdom, chance presents you to my view."

My companion alighting immediately, ran and embraced the baron, whose joy seemed to be immoderate. " Come, my son, said the good old man to him, you will now know who you are, and enjoy the most perfect happiness." — So saying, he carried him into the castle, which I likewise entered along with them; for while they embraced one another, I had alighted and tied our horses to a tree. The master of the castle was the first person whom we met. He was a man of about fifty years of age, and a very engaging aspect: " Signior, said the Baron de Steinbach, presenting Don Alphonso to him, behold your son." At these words, Don Cæsar de Leyva, so was the master of the castle called, threw his arms about Don Alphonso's neck, and weeping with joy, " My dear son, said he, you see in me the author of your being. If I have let you remain so long in ignorance of your birth, believe me, I did in that a cruel violence to myself: I have a thousand times sighed with sorrow; but I could not do otherwise. I married your mother through inclination, though she was of a birth inferior to mine; and lived under the authority of a harsh father, who reduced me to the necessity of keeping secret a marriage contracted without his consent. The Baron de Steinbach alone was in my confidence, and it was in concert with me that he brought you up. In short, my father is no more, and I now am at liberty to declare you my sole heir. This is not all, added he, you shall be married to a young lady, whose nobility equals mine." " Signior,

or, cried Don Alphonso, interrupting him, don't make me pay too dear for the happiness which you bestow. Cannot I know that I have the honour of being your son, without learning, at the same time, that you want to make me unhappy? Ah, Sir! be not more cruel than your own father, who, though he did not approve of your passion, was not so severe as to force you to marry." "Son, replied Don Cæsar, I don't intend to tyrannize over your affections; but be so complaisant as to see the lady whom I destine for your bed: that is all I exact of your obedience. Though she is a charming creature, and a very advantageous match for you, I promise not to constrain you to make her your wife. She is now in the castle; follow me, and you will own, that there never was a more amiable object." So saying, he conducted Don Alphonso into an apartment, whither I attended them, with the Baron de Steinbach.

There was the count de Polan, with his two daughters, Seraphina and Julia, and Don Fernand, his son-in-law, who was nephew to Don Cæsar: there were other ladies and gentlemen present also. Don Fernand, as was already observed, had carried off Julia; and it was on occasion of the marriage of these two lovers, that the peasants of the neighbourhood were assembled to make merry. As soon as Don Alphonso appeared, and his father had presented him to the company, the Count de Polan got up, and running to embrace him, said, "Welcome, my deliverer! Don Alphonso, added he, observe the power that virtue has on generous minds: if you killed my son, you have also saved my life. I sacrifice my resentment to you, and give you that Seraphina, whose honour you have preserved. In this manner I acquit myself of my obligation. The son of Dón Cæsar did not fail to testify to the Count de Polan, how much he was affected with his generosity; and I don't know whether he felt more joy in discovering his birth, or in learning that he was to be Seraphina's husband. In effect, that

marriage

marriage was celebrated in a few days after, to the infinite satisfaction of the parties concerned.

As I was also one of the count's deliverers, that nobleman, who knew me again, assured me, he would take upon himself the care of making my fortune; but I thanked him for his generosity, and would not leave Don Alphonso, who made me steward of his house, and honoured me with his confidence. Scarce was he married, when the trick which had been played upon Samuel Simon lying on his conscience, he sent me to that merchant, with all the money which had been stolen from him. I went accordingly to make restitution, and began the business of a steward, by doing that which ought to be the end of it.

B O O K VII.

C H A P. I.

The amours of Gil Blas and dame Lorenca Sephora.

I WENT accordingly to Xelva, to make restitution of the three thousand ducats, which we had stole from Samuel Simon; and will freely own, that I was tempted on the road to convert the money to my own use, in order to begin my stewardship under happy auspices. This I might have done with impunity; for, had I travelled five or six days, and then returned, as if I had acquitted myself of my commission, Don Alphonso and his father would never have suspected my fidelity. I did not yield, however, to the temptation, which I surmounted like a lad of honour: a victory not a little commendable in a young fellow, who had associated with great cheats. There are a great many, who, though acquainted with honest people only, are not so scrupulous;

lous ; those, especially, who are entrusted with sums which they may keep, without interesting their reputation.

Having made restitution to the merchant, who expected nothing less, I returned to the castle of Leyva, which the count de Polan having left, had set out again for Toledo, with Julia and Don Fernand. I found my new master more captivated than ever with Seraphina ; his Seraphina enchanted by him, and Don Cæsar charmed by the possession of them both. I endeavoured to gain the friendship of that tender father, and succeeded : I became steward of the family, regulated every thing in it, received money from the farmers, disbursed for the expence of houle-keeping, and had a despotic power over all the servants. But, contrary to the usual practice of stewards, I did not abuse my power ; I did not turn away those domestics who displeased me, nor expected that the rest should be entirely devoted to my will : if they addressed themselves directly to Don Cæsar, or his son, when they wanted any favour, far from thwarting their interest, I always spoke in their behalf ; besides, the marks of affection which I every moment received from my masters, inspired me with zeal for their service ; and I had nothing but their interest in view. There was no legerdemain in my administration ; and I was such a steward as is not every day to be met with.

While I enjoyed the happiness of my condition, love, as if he had been jealous of what fortune had done for me, had a mind that I should owe some favours to him also ; and produced in the heart of dame Lorenca Sephora, chief waiting-woman to Seraphina, a violent inclination for master Steward. My conquest (to relate things like a faithful historian) glanced upon her fiftieth year ; but a lively look, an agreeable countenance, and two fine eyes, which she knew how to use to the best advantage, might be said to make her still pass for the object of an intrigue. I could

could have wished only for a few roses in her complexion, for she was extremely pale; a circumstance which I did not fail to attribute to the austerity of celibacy.

The lady practised upon me a long time, by looks, in which her passion was painted: but instead of answering her glances, I at first seemed not to perceive her design; by which behaviour, I appeared to her as a novice in gallantry; a discovery that she did not dislike. Imagining, therefore, that she ought no longer to confine herself to the language of the eyes, with a young man whom she believed less knowing than he was; during the very first conversation we had together, she declared her sentiments in form, that I might not be ignorant of them for the future. This she performed like one who had been at school. She feigned to be disconcerted while she spoke to me, and after having freely expressed all that she had to say, hid her face, to make me believe she was ashamed of letting me see her weakness. There was no resisting; and though I was determined more by vanity than inclination, I shewed myself very sensible of her affection: I even affected to be urgent, and acted the passionate lover so well, that I attracted her reproaches. Lorenca reproved me, but with so much gentleness, that while she recommended moderation to me, she seemed not at all sorry at my want of it. I should have pushed things still farther, if the beloved object had not been afraid of giving me a bad opinion of her virtue, by granting me a victory too cheap. We therefore parted till another occasion; Sephora, persuaded that her false resistance made me look upon her as a vestal, and I, elevated with the sweet hope of bringing the adventure soon to a conclusion.

My affairs were in this situation, when one of Don Cæsar's lacquies, told me a piece of news which moderated my joy. This young fellow was one of those curious domestics, who make it their business to discover

cover what passes in the family. As he was very a-fiduous in paying his court to me, and regaled me every day with something new ; he came one morning, and told me, that he had made a pleasant discovery, which he would communicate to me, on condition that I should keep it secret ; because it regarded dame Lorenca Sephora, whose resentment (he said) he was afraid of incurring. I was too eager to hear what he had to say, not to promise secrecy ; but without seeming to be in the least concerned, I asked him, with all the indifference I could affect, what the discovery was with which he intended to entertain me ? Lorenca (said he) every evening, privately admits into her apartment the surgeon of the village, a very stout young fellow, and the rogue always remains with her a considerable time. I am willing to believe (added he, with a satirical smile) that this behaviour may be very innocent ; but you must allow, that a young man, who slips so mysteriously into a maid's chamber, gives a handle to Scandal to be very free with her character."

Although this report gave me as much pain, as if I had been actually in love, I took care to conceal my vexation ; I even constrained myself so much, as to laugh at the news that pierced me to the very soul. But I indemnified myself for that constraint, as soon as I saw myself alone. I cursed, I swore, and mused upon the resolution I should take. Sometimes, despising Lorenca, I proposed to abandon her, without even deigning to come to an explanation with the coquette ; and sometimes, imagining that I was bound in honour to banish the surgeon from the house, I formed the design of challenging him to single combat. This last resolution prevailed : I lay in ambush towards the evening, and sure enough perceived my man enter with a mysterious air into the apartment of my duenna. This was necessary to support my fury : I went out of the castle, and posted myself on the road by which the gallant must return ; here I waited

ed for him without flinching, and every moment the desire of fighting with him increased. At length, my enemy appeared, and I went forwards some yards like a Drawcansir; but I don't know how the devil it happened, I found myself all of a sudden seized, like one of Homer's heroes, with an emotion of fear that arrested my steps; and I stood as much confounded as Paris, when he presented himself to fight Menelaus. I began to consider my man, who seemed strong and vigorous; and his sword appeared to be of an excessive length. All this had its effect upon me; nevertheless, out of a point of honour, or otherwise, though I saw the danger with magnifying eyes; and in spite of nature, which made obstinate efforts to make me desist, I had the boldness to advance towards the surgeon, and unsheathe my rapier.

Surprized at my action, he cried, "What is the matter, Mr. Gil Blas? what is the meaning of these demonstrations? You are pleased to be merry, I suppose." "No, Mr. Barber (I replied) you are mistaken; I am in a very serious humour, and want to know whether or not you are as brave as gallant. You must not expect that I will let you possess in tranquillity the favours of the lady whom you visit at the castle." "By St. Come *! (said the surgeon, bursting into a loud laugh) here is a pleasant adventure. Egad, appearances are very deceitful." From these words imagining that he was as little inclined to fight as I, I became more insolent, and said, "Friend, that won't pass; don't think that I will be satisfied with a simple denial." "I see then (answered he) that I shall be obliged to speak, in order to prevent the mischief which might happen to you or me; and I must reveal a secret, although people of our profession cannot be too discreet. If dame Lorena admits me by stealth into her apartment, it is

* St. Come was a physician and martyr; therefore not improperly invoked by the surgeon.

with a view of concealing her distemper from the servants : she has an inveterate cancer in her back, which I dress every evening. This is the cause of the visits which alarm you ; so that you may henceforth keep your heart at ease. Though (added he) if you are not satisfied with this declaration, but absolutely bent upon coming to points, speak the word ; I am your man." So saying, he drew his long rapier, which made me shiver ; and put himself upon his guard. "Enough (said I to him, sheathing my sword) I am not a brute, to refuse to hear reason : after what you have told me, you are no longer my enemy ; let us embrace." At this discourse, which shewed him that I was not such a devil as I at first appeared to be, he laughed, put up his rapier, gave me his hand ; and, in short, we parted the best friends in the world.

From that moment Sephora presented nothing but disagreeable ideas to my imagination : I avoided every opportunity she gave me of conversing with her in private, and that with so much care and affectation, that she perceived my disgust. Astonished at such a change, she resolved to know the cause ; and at length, finding an occasion to speak with me apart, " Mr. Steward (said she) pray tell me, why you avoid the sight of me. 'Tis true, I made some advances, but you made suitable returns. Recollect, if you please, the private conversation we had together : you was then all fire, but now you are all ice. What is the meaning of all this?" This was a very delicate question for a plain man ; consequently, it embarrassed me not a little. I don't remember the answer which I made ; but displeased very much, and that was enough. Sephora, though by her sweet modest air, one would have taken her for a lamb, was a very tygress when her wrath prevailed. " I thought (said she, darting at me a look full of spite and rage) that I did a great deal of honour to a little fellow like you, in discovering to him those sentiments which noble cavaliers would have gloried in exciting ; but I am

justly

justly punished for having unworthily abased them to a wretched adventurer." Had she stopt here, I should have thought myself cheaply quit. Her tongue, obedient to her fury, honoured me with an hundred epithets, every one more bitter than another. I ought to have heard them in cold blood, and reflected, that in disdaining the triumph of her virtue, which I had attempted, I committed a crime that no woman can forgive. But I was too passionate to bear reproaches, at which, a sensible man, in my place, would have laughed: and my patience forsaking me, " Madam (said I) we ought not to despise any body: if those noble cavaliers, of whom you speak, had seen your back, I am sure their curiosity would have proceeded no farther." I had no sooner uttered this repartee, than the furious duenna gave me the rudest box on the ear that ever an affronted woman bestowed. I did not wait for a second; but, by a speedy flight, avoided a shower of blows, that would certainly have fallen upon my carcase.

I thanked heaven when I found myself extricated out of this troublesome affair; and imagined I had nothing more to fear, since the lady had revenged herself. I thought that, for her own honour, she would never mention the adventure: and indeed fifteen days elapsed before I heard any thing of the matter. I myself began to forget it, when I understood that Sephora was ill: I was humane enough to be afflicted at the news; I pitied the lady, and believing that, not being able to overcome a passion so ill requited, she had fallen a victim to her unhappy love: I reflected with sorrow, that I was the cause of her indisposition, and at least lamented the duenna, if I could not love her. How much was I mistaken in my opinion! her tenderness changed into hate, and at that time, her whole study was to do me mischief.

One morning, being alone with Don Alphonso, and observing that young gentleman pensive and sad, I begged, in a respectful manner, to know the cause.

" I am

" I am chagrined, said he, to find Seraphina weak, ungrateful, and unjust. You are astonished at this information, added he, perceiving that I listened with surprize, and yet nothing is more true. I don't know what cause you may have given dame Lorena to hate you; but you are assuredly become so odious to her, that if you don't leave the castle with the utmost dispatch, her death, she says, will be inevitable. You ought not to doubt that Seraphina, who has a regard for you, at first revolted against a hate which she could not gratify, without injustice and ingratitude. But, in short, she is a woman: she has a tender affection for Sephora, who brought her up; and that gover-nante is a sort of a mother to her, whose death she would reproach herself with, if she was not weak enough to satisfy this her desire. As for my part, notwithstanding the love that attaches me to Seraphina, I shall never have the base complaisance to adhere to her sentiments on this subject. Perish all the duennas in Spain, before I consent to the removal of a young man whom I consider more as a brother than a domestic."

Alphonso having spoke thus, I said to him, " Signor, I am born to be the sport of fortune: I thought she would have ceased to persecute me in your house, where every thing flattered me with quiet and happy days: but how agreeable soever my situation may be, I find I must give it up." " Not at all! cried the generous son of Don Cæsar, leave me to make Seraphina hear reason: it shall never be said, that you have been sacrificed to the caprice of a duenna, to whom too much consideration has been paid in other respects."

" Sir, said I, you will only provoke Seraphina, in resiling her will. I had much rather retire, than by a longer stay in this place, run the risk of breeding any division between such a happy pair: that would be a misfortune for which I should never be consoled."

Don Alphonso forbade me to take any such resolution;

tion; and I saw him so fixed in the design of supporting me, that Lorena would undoubtedly have met with a rebuff, if I had been minded to oppose her. At certain times, being piqued, I was tempted to expose her: but when I came to consider, that in revealing her shame, I should stab the heart of a poor creature whose indisposition I was the occasion of; and that two incurable distempers visibly conducted her to the grave, my resentment was changed into compassion; and I concluded, that since I was such a dangerous mortal, I ought in conscience to re-establish, by my retreat, the tranquillity of the castle. This resolution I executed the very next morning before day, without bidding adieu to my two masters, lest, through friendship for me, they should oppose my departure. I contented myself with leaving in my chamber a writing, wherein was contained an exact account of my administration.

C H A P . II.

The fate of Gil Blas, after he quitted the castle of Leyva, and the happy consequence that attended the bad success of his amours.

I Was mounted on a good horse of my own, with two hundred pistoles in my portmanteau, the best part of which I had got by the banditti whom we slew, and the share of the three thousand ducats which had been stolen from Samuel Simon; for Don Alphonso, without making me restore what I had fingered, had made restitution of the whole sum out of his own pocket. Wherefore, considering my effects as wealth become lawful, I enjoyed it without scruple. I was in possession of a fund, therefore, which did not allow me to be much concerned for the future, over and above the confidence which one of my age always has in his own merit: besides, Toledo presented an agreeable asylum: for I did not at all doubt that the Count de Polan would be pleased with

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an opportunity of obliging one of his deliverers with a kind reception, and an apartment in his house. But this nobleman I looked upon as my last resource, and resolved, before I should apply to him, to spend part of my money in travelling through the kingdoms of Murcia and Grenada, which I longed particularly to see. With this design, I set out for Aluiansa, whence continuing my journey, I went from city to city, as far as Grenada*, without meeting with any bad accident. Fortune, satisfied with having played me so many tricks, seemed willing at length to leave me in quiet: but for all that, she was then hatching a great many more, as will be seen in the sequel. One of the first persons I met in the streets of Grenada, was Signior Don Fernand de Leyva, who was, as well as Don Alphonso, son-in-law to the Count de Polan. We were equally surprized at seeing one another in that place. " Gil Blas, cried he, how come you to be in this city? What business brings you hither?" " Signior, said I, if you are astonished to see me in this country, you will be much more so, when you hear the cause of my quitting the service of Signior Don Cæsar and his son." Then I recounted all that had passed between Sephora and me, without the least disguise. He laughed heartily at the adventure; then growing serious again, " Friend, said he, I offer you my mediation in this affair, and will write to my sister-in law." " By no means, Signior, said I, interrupting him, pray don't write; for I did not leave the castle of Leyva with any intention to return. Make, if you please, another use of the regard you have for me; and if any one of your friends has occasion for a secretary or steward, I beg you will speak to him in my favour. I dare assure you, that you shall have no cause

* Grenada, the capital of the kingdom that bears the same name, is the largest and most pleasant city in Spain, built on the banks of the river Darro; the seat of a famous university, and see of an archbishop.

cause to repent of your recommendation." "With all my heart, he replied; I will do what you desire. I am come to Grenada to visit an old aunt, who is sick; and I shall stay here three weeks longer; at the end of which, I shall set out on my return to my castle of Lorqui, where I have left Julia. I lodge here, added he, shewing me a house about an hundred yards from us, come and call for me some hours hence; by which time, perhaps, I shall have discovered some suitable post for you."

And indeed, at our very next meeting, he said, "The archbishop of Grenada, my kinsman and friend, wants a young man of letters, possessed of a good hand, to make fair copies of his writings; for he is a great author, has composed a vast number of homilies, and studies more every day, which he pronounces with applause. As I believe you are such an one as he wants, I proposed you to him, and he has promised to take you into his service. Go, and present yourself to him, in my name; and you may judge, by the reception which you shall receive, whether or not I have spoke in your behalf."

This was just such a place as I desired: wherefore, having dressed to the best advantage, in order to appear before that prelate, I repaired one morning to the archbishop's palace. Here, was I to imitate the authors of romance, I should give a pompous description of this episcopal palace of Grenada: I would enlarge upon the structure of the building, extol the richness of the furniture, describe the statues and pictures, and not spare the reader the least tittle of the stories they represented: but I shall content myself with observing, that it equalled the royal palace in magnificence.

I found in the apartments a croud of ecclesiasticks, and gentlemen of the sword, the greatest part whereof were the officers of his grace: his almoners, his gentlemen, his ushers, and valet de chambre. The laity were, almost all, so superbly dressed, that one would have

have taken them for noblemen rather than domestics, by their haughty looks, and affectation of being men of consequence. While I beheld them, I could not help laughing, and ridiculing them within myself. " Egad, said I, these people are very happy in bearing the yoke of servitude without feeling it ; for, in short, if they felt it, I imagine that their behaviour would be less assuming." Addressing myself to a grave jolly personage, that stood at the door of the archbishop's closet, in order to open and shut it when there was occasion ; I asked civilly, if I could not speak with his grace. " Wait, said he drily, till his grace comes out to go to mass, and he will give you a moment's audience in passing. I armed myself with patience, and endeavoured to enter into conversation with some of the officers ; but they began to examine me from head to foot, without deigning to speak one syllable ; and then looking at one another, smiling with disdain at the liberty which I had taken, to mingle in their discourse. I was, I own, quite disconcerted at seeing myself treated in this manner by valets ; and had scarce recollect'd myself from the confusion in which I was, when the closet-door opened, and the archbishop appeared.

Immediately a profound silence prevailed among his officers, who all of a sudden, laid aside their insolent carriage, and assumed a respectful look in presence of their master. This prelate was in his sixtieth year, pretty much of the make of my uncle the canon Gil Perez ; that is, plump and short : he was very much bandy-legged into the bargain, and so bald, that he had only a small tuft of hair remaining on the back part of his head ; for which reason, he was obliged to cover his head in a fine woolen cap with long ears. In spite of all that, I observed in him the air of a man of quality ; doubtless, because I knew him to be one. We common people look upon all your great noblemen with a prepossession

session that often gives them an air of greatness which nature has refused.

The archbishop immediately advancing towards me, asked what I wanted, with a voice full of sweetness: and I told him, that I was the young man of whom Don Fernand de Leyva had spoke to him. He gave me no time to proceed; but cried, "Oh! you are the person then of whom he spoke so handsomely. I retain you in my service: you are a valuable acquisition. You may stay where you are." So saying, he went out, supported by two ushers, after having heard some clergymen, who had something to communicate. Scarce was he out of the room, when the same officers who disdained my conversation, now courted it. They surrounded me, and with the utmost complaisance expressed their joy at seeing me become a commensal officer of the palace. Having heard what their master said to me, they had a longing desire to know on what footing I was retained; but I was so malicious as to baulk their curiosity, in revenge for their contempt.

His grace returning in a little time, made me follow him into his closet, that he might talk with me in private. I concluded, that his design in so doing was to try my understanding; and, accordingly, kept myself on my guard, and was resolved to weigh every word before I should speak it. He first of all examined me on what is called humanity; and I did not answer amiss: he had occasion to see, that I was pretty well acquainted with the Greek and Latin authors. He then put me upon logic, where I expected him, and found me quite master of that subject. "Your education, said he to me with some surprize, has not been neglected: let us now see your hand-writing." I thereupon took out of my pocket a sheet, which I had brought for the purpose; and the prelate seemed very well pleased with my performance. "I am satisfied with your hand, he cried, and still more with your understanding. I shall thank my nephew Don Fernand

Fernand for having given me such an able young man whom I look upon as a real present."

Being interrupted by the arrival of some noblemen of Grenada, who came to dine with the archbishop, I left them together, and withdrew among the officers, who were quite profuse in their complaisance to me. I went to dinner with them at the usual time; and if they observed me at table, I did not fail to examine them also. What sagacity there is in the exteriors of churchmen! To me they appeared all saints; so much was my mind over-awed by the place where I was; and I did not so much as suspect, that there could be any false money in the case; as if no such thing was ever seen among the princes of the church.

Being seated by an old valet de chambre, whose name was Melchior de la Ronda, he took great care to help me to the choice bits; and this attention which he expressed for me, inspiring me with a respect for him, he was charmed with my polite behaviour. "Signior cavalier," said he softly to me, after dinner, "I want to have some private conversation with you." At the same time he carried me to a part of the palace, where nobody could overhear us; and there talked to me in this manner: "Son, from the very first moment in which I saw you, I felt an inclination for you: of this I'll give you certain proof; by imparting something which may be of great advantage to you. You are here in a family, where true and false devotees live pell-mell; so that it will be an infinite time before you can, of yourself, be acquainted with the ground. But I will spare you such a tedious and disagreeable study, by discovering the characters of both; after which, you may the more easily conduct yourself.

I will begin (added he) with his grace, who is a very pious prelate, incessantly employed in edifying and reforming his people, by sermons of his own composition, full of excellent morals. He quitted the court about twenty years ago, in order to devote himself

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himself entirely to his zeal for his flock. He is a learned man and a great orator, whose sole pleasure consists in preaching, and his hearers are ravished with admiration. Perhaps there is a little vanity in the case : but besides that it does not belong to man to penetrate the heart ; it would be ungrateful in me to inquire into the faults of a person whose bread I eat. If I was permitted to disapprove of any thing in my master, I would blame his severity. Instead of making an allowance for ecclesiastical foibles, he punishes them with too much rigour : in particular, he persecutes, without mercy, those who, relying on their innocence, attempt to justify themselves in a legal manner, in contempt of his authority. I observe another fault which is common to him with a great many people of quality : although he loves his domestics, he makes no considerations for their services ; but lets them grow old, without ever thinking of procuring for them some small settlement. If he gives them gratifications sometimes, they owe them solely to the goodness of somebody who have spoken in their behalf : for it would never come into his head to provide for them otherwise."

This is what the old valet de chambre told me of his master ; and he afterwards communicated his thoughts of the clergymen with whom we had dined ; pictures which but ill agreed with their external deportment. Indeed he did not represent them as dishonest men, but only as bad priests ; excepting some, however, whose virtue he very much extolled. I was no longer at a loss how to regulate my features among those gentlemen : that very evening at supper, I, like them assumed a fage aspect ; a task that costs nothing : so that we must not wonder that there are so many hypocrites in the world.

C H A P. III.

Gil Blas becomes the favourite of the archbishop, and the canal of his bounty.

I Had been in the afternoon, to fetch my baggage and horse from the inn where I had lodged; after which I returned to supper at the palace, where I found a very handsome chamber and a down bed prepared for me. His grace ordered me to be called early next morning; and gave me a homily to transcribe, enjoining me to copy it with all possible exactness. This I performed minutely, without having forgot either accent, point, or comma; so that the joy he expressed was mingled with surprize. "Good! heaven (cried he, in a transport, when he had surveyed all the sheets of my copy) was ever any thing seen so correct? You transcribe so well that you must certainly understand grammar.—Tell me, ingenuously, my friend, have you found nothing that shocked you in writing it over? Some neglect, perhaps in the style, or improper term?" "O, sir (answered I, with an air of modesty) I am not learned enough to make critical observations; and if I was, I am persuaded that the works of your grace would escape my censure." The prelate smiled at my reply, and though he said nothing, discovered through all his piety that he was a downright author.

By this kind of flattery, I entirely gained his good graces, became more and more dear to him every day; and at length understood from Don Fernand, who visited him very often, that I was so much beloved, I might look upon my fortune as already made. This my master himself confirmed to me, a little time after, on the following occasion. One evening he repeated in his closet, when I was present, with great enthusiasm, an homily which he intended to pronounce the next day in the cathedral; and not satisfied with asking my opinion of it in general, obliged

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me to single out the particular passages which I most admired. I had the good luck to mention those that he himself looked upon to be the best, his own favourite morscaus: by which means I passed, in his judgment, for a man who had a delicate knowledge of the true beauties of a work. "This is (cried he) what is called having taste and sentiment! Well, friend, I assure thee thou hast not got Bozotian ears." In a word, he was so well satisfied with me, that he pronounced with some vivacity, "Gil Blas, henceforth give thyself no uneasiness about thy fortune: I undertake to make it extremely agreeable: I love thee; and as a proof of my affection, make thee my confidant."

I no sooner heard these words, than I fell at his grace's feet, quite penetrated with gratitude; I heartily embraced his bandy legs; and looked upon myself as a man on the high way to wealth and opulence. "Yes, my child (resumed the archbishop, whose discourse had been interrupted by my prostration) thou shalt be the repository of my most secret thoughts. Listen with attention to what I am going to say: my chief pleasure consists in preaching; the Lord gives a blessing to my homilies: they touch the hearts of sinners, make them seriously reflect on their conduct, and have recourse to repentance. I have sometimes the satisfaction to see a miser, terrified by the images which I represent to his avarice, open his treasures, and squander them with a prodigal hand. I have also tore, as it were, the epicurean from his pleasures, filled hermitages with the sons of ambition, and confirmed in her duty the wife who has been shaken by the allurements of a seducing lover. These conversions, which are frequent, ought of themselves to excite my study: nevertheless, I will confess my weakness; I propose to myself another reward, a reward which the delicacy of my virtue reproaches me with in vain! I mean the esteem that the world shews for fine polished writing. The honour of being reckoned

ed a perfect orator has charmed my imagination ; my performances are thought equally strong and delicate ; but I would of all things, avoid the fault of good authors, who write too long, and retire without forfeiting the least tittle of my reputation. Wherefore, my dear Gil Blas, (continued the prelate) one thing that I exact of thy zeal is, whenever thou shalt perceive my pen smack of old age, and my genius flag, don't fail to advertise me of it ; for I don't trust to my own judgment, which may be seduced by self-love. That observation must proceed from a disinterested understanding, and I make choice of thine, which I know is good ; resolved to stand to thy decision." " Thank heaven, Sir, (said I) that period is far off : besides, a genius like that of your grace will preserve its vigour much better than any other ; or, to speak more justly, will be always the same, I look upon you as another cardinal Ximenes, whose superior genius, instead of being weakened by age, seemed to receive new strength from it." " No flattery, friend, (said he, interrupting me) I know I am liable to sink all at once : people at my age begin to feel infirmities, and the infirmities of the body often affect the understanding. I repeat it to thee again, Gil Blas, as soon as thou shalt judge mine in the least impaired, be sure to give me notice ; and be not afraid of speaking freely and sincerely, for I shall receive thy advice as a mark of thy affection. Besides, thy interest is concerned ; if unhappily for thee, it should come to my ears, that the public says my discourses have no longer their wonted force, and that it is high time for me to repose myself ; I frankly declare, that thou shalt lose my friendship, as well as the fortune I have promised. Such will be the fruit of thy foolish reserve."

Here my patron left off speaking, in order to hear my reply ; which was, a promise to behave according to his desire. From that moment he concealed nothing from me, I became his favourite ; an event

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which none of his domestics, except Melchior de la Ronda, could perceive without envy. It was a diverting scene to behold the manner in which the gentlemen and squires then lived with the confidant of his grace : they were not ashamed to be guilty of grovelling meanness, in order to captivate my good will. I could scarce believe they were Spaniards ; tho' I did them good offices, without being the dupe of their selfish complaisance. His grace the archbishop, at my request, exerted himself in their favour : to one he procured a company, and put him in a condition to make a figure in the army. Another he sent to Mexico, to take possession of a considerable post which he had obtained for him ; and, my friend Melchior, thro' my means, enjoyed a handsome gratification. This condescension convinced me, that though the prelate did not anticipate people's desires, he rarely refused any favour that was asked.

But what I did for a certain priest, deserves, in my opinion, to be told : one day a licenciate, whose name was Lewis Garcia, a young man of a very good appearance, was presented to me by our steward ; who said, " Signior Gil Blas, this honest clergyman is one of my best friends ; he was chaplain of a nunnery ; and his virtue has not escaped scandal : some people have done him ill offices with his grace, who has suspended him, and is unhappily so much prejudiced against him, that he will listen to no solicitation in his behalf. We have employed, to no purpose, all the persons of rank in Grenada, to beg that he may be re established ; but our master is quite inflexible."

" Gentlemen, (said I) you have gone the wrong way to work ; it would have been better for Mr. Licenciate if no solicitation had been made : for in their endeavours to serve him, they have done him a manifest injury. I am well acquainted with his grace ; intreaties and recommendations serve only to aggravate, in his opinion, the fault of an occ-

Celsastic. It was but t'other day I heard him say to himself, " The more people a priest, who has been guilty of irregularity, engages to speak to me in his behalf, the more is the scandal augmented, and the more severity do I exercise." " That is unfortunate (replied the steward) and my friend would be very much embarrassed, if he was not blessed with a good hand: happily for him, he writes to admiration: and, by the help of that talent, keeps himself out of difficulties." I was curious to see if this writing, so much extolled, was much better than my own: and the licentiate, who had a specimen in his pocket, shewed me a page that I admired very much; for it looked like a writing-master's copy. While I considered this beautiful performance, a thought coming into my head, I desired Garcias to leave the paper, telling him that I might possibly make some use of it, that would turn out to his advantage; that I could not explain myself at that time, but would next day tell him more of the matter. The licentiate, to whom, in all probability, the steward had made an eulogium of my genius, withdrew as much satisfied, as if he had been already reinstated in his office. I was truly desirous that he might be so; and that same day laboured for him in the following manner: being alone with the archbishop, I shewed him the writing of Garcias, with which my patron seemed quite charmed: then, laying hold of the opportunity, " Sir, (said I to him) since you won't cause your homilies to be printed, I wish they were at least written in this hand." " I am satisfied with thine (answered the prelate) but I own I should not be sorry to have a copy of my works in that hand." " Your grace (I replied) has nothing to do but speak: the man who paints so well is a licentiate of my acquaintance, who will be ravished to do that service for you; the more, because by these means he may interest your goodness, in extricating him from the melancholy situation in which he has the misfortune to be at present."

The prelate did not fail to ask the name of the licentiate : upon which I said, " He is called Lewis Garcias, and is in despair on account of having incurred your displeasure." " That Garcias (said he, interrupting me) was, if I am not mistaken, chaplain to a convent of nuns, and lies under the censure of the church : I remember some informations that I received against him : his morals are but indifferent."

" Sir, (said I, interrupting him in my turn) I will not undertake to justify him ; but I know he has enemies ; and pretends, that the authors of these informations which you have seen, were more bent upon doing him ill offices, than on telling the truth." " That may be, (replied the archbishop) there are abundance of very dangerous dispositions in this world. Besides, granting that his conduct has not always been irreproachable, he may have repented of his misbehaviour ; and in short, there is mercy for every transgression. Bring the licentiate hither, I take off his suspension."

Thus it is, that the most severe men abate of their severity, when more dear self-interest is concerned. The arch-bishop granted, without difficulty, to the vain pleasure of having his works well writ, that which he had refused to the most powerful solicitations. I carried the news immediately to the steward, who imparted them to his friend Garcias, who the very next day, coming to make an acknowledgment of thanks suitable to the favour obtained, I presented him to my master, who contented himself with reprimanding him slightly, and gave him the homilies to transcribe. Garcias acquitted himself so well, that he was re-established in his ministry, and even obtained the living of Gabia, a large market-town in the neighbourhood of Grenada,

C H A P. IV.

The archbishop is seized with a fit of the apoplexy. The dilemma in which Gil Blas found himself, and the method he took to be extricated.

WHILE I thus bestowed my services on different people, Don Fernand being about to leave Grenada, I visited that nobleman before his departure, in order to thank him anew, for the excellent post which he had procured for me. I appeared to him so well satisfied with my condition, that he said; " My dear Gil Blas, I am ravished to find thee so well pleased with my uncle the archbishop." " I am charmed with him, (I replied) and shall never be able to shew myself grateful enough for his generosity to me. Nothing less could have consoled me for the loss of Don Cæsar and his son." " I am persuaded (answered he) that they are both extremely mortified at your absence; but, perhaps, you are not separated for ever: fortune may one day bring you together again." Melted by these words, I sighed, and found at that instant my love for Don Alphonso so great, that I would willingly have abandoned the archbishop, with all the agreeable hopes he had given me, to return to the castle of Leyva, if the obstacle that banished me from it had been removed. Don Fernand perceived the emotions of my soul, which pleased him so much, that he embraced me with affection, and assured me that his whole family would always bear a part in my destiny.

Two months after this gentleman's departure, in the very zenith of my favour, we had a hot alarm in the episcopal palace: the archbishop was seized with a fit of the apoplexy; he was, however, succoured immediately, and such salutary medicines administered, that in a few days his health was re-established: but his understanding had received a rude shock, which I plainly perceived in the very next discourse which he composed. I did not, however,

find

And the difference between this and the rest so sensible as to make me conclude that the orator began to flag ; and waited for another homily to fix my resolution. This indeed was quite decisive ; sometimes the good old prelate repeated the same thing over and over ; sometimes rose too high, or sunk too low : it was a vague discourse, the rhetoric of an old professor, a *meer capucinade* *.

I was not the only person who took notice of this : the greatest part of the audience when he pronounced it, as if they had been also hired to examine it, said softly to one another, " This sermon smells strong of the apoplexy." " Come, master homily-critic, (said I then to myself) prepare to do your office : you see that his grace begins to fail : it is your duty to give him notice of it, not only as the depository of his thoughts, but likewise, lest some one of his friends should be free enough with him to prevent you : in that case you know what would happen ; your name would be erased from his last will, in which there is doubtless, a better legacy provided for you, than the library of the licentiate Sedillo.

After these reflections, I made others of a quite contrary nature. To give the notice in question, seemed a delicate point. I imagined that it might be ill received by an author like him, conceited of his own works ; but rejecting this suggestion, I represented to myself, that he could not possibly take it amiss, after having exacted it of me in so pressing a manner. Add to this, that I depended upon my being able to mention it with address, and make him swallow the pill without reluctance. In a word, finding that I ran a greater risque in keeping silence, than in breaking it, I determined to speak.

The only thing that embarrassed me now, was how

* Capucinade. A sarcasm on the sermons of the capuchins, which are not remarkable for correctness of composition.

to break the ice. Luckily, the orator himself extricated me from that difficulty, by asking what people said of him, and if they were satisfied with his last discourse. I answered, that his homilies were always admired, but, in my opinion, the last had not succeeded so well as the rest, in affecting the audience. "How, friend! (replied he, with astonishment) has it met with any Aristarchus *?" "No, Sir (said I) by no means: such works as yours are not to be criticised: every body is charmed with them. Nevertheless, since you have laid your injunctions upon me, to be free and sincere, I will take the liberty to tell you, that your last discourse in my judgment, has not altogether the energy of your other performances. Are not you of the same opinion?"

My master grew pale at these words; and said with a forced smile, "So then, Mr. Gil Blas, this piece is not to your taste?" "I don't say so, Sir, cried I, quite disconcerted, I think it excellent, although a little inferior to your other works." "I understand you (he replied) you think I flag, don't you? Come, be plain: you believe it is time for me to think of retiring." "I should not have been so bold (said I) as to speak so freely, if your grace had not commanded me: I do no more therefore, than obey you; and I most humbly beg that you will not be offended at my freedom." "God forbid (cried he with precipitation) God forbid that I should find fault with it. In so doing, I should be very unjust; I don't at all take it ill that you speak your sentiment; it is your sentiment only that I find bad. I have been most egregiously deceived in your narrow understanding."

Though I was disconcerted, I endeavoured to find some mitigation, in order to set things to rights again: but how is it possible to appease an incensed

* Aristarchus, a great critic in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

author, one especially who had been accustomed to hear himself praised ? " Say no more, my child, said he : you are yet too raw to make proper distinctions. Know, that I never composed a better homily than that which you disapprove : for my genius (thank heaven) hath, as yet, lost nothing of its vigour. Henceforth I will make a better choice of a confidant, and keep one of greater ability than you. Go (added he, pushing me by the shoulders out of his closet) go tell my treasurer to give you an hundred ducats, and may heaven conduct you with that sum. Adieu, Mr. Gil Blas ; I wish you all manner of prosperity, with a little more taste."

C H A P . V.

The step that Gil Blas took after the archbishop had dismissed him. His accidental meeting with the licentiate who had been so much obliged to him, with the gratitude of that priest.

I WENT out of the closet, cursing the caprice, or rather weakness of the archbishop, and more enraged against him than afflicted at the loss of his favour. I even doubted some time, if I should go and touch my hundred ducats ; but, after mature deliberation, I was not fool enough to refuse them. I considered, that this money would not deprive me of the right of ridiculing the prelate ; in which, I was resolved not to be wanting, as often as his homilies should be brought upon the carpet in my presence.

I went, therefore, and demanded the hundred ducats of the treasurer, without mentioning a single word of what had happened between his master and me ; and went afterwards in quest of Melchior de la Ronda, to bid him an eternal adieu. He loved me too much, to be insensible of my misfortune, which while I recounted, I perceived that grief was printed on his countenance. In spite of all the respect he owed

ed the archbishop, he could not help blaming his behaviour. But as I swore in my rage, that the prelate should pay for it, and that I would make the whole town merry at his expence, the sage Melchior said to me, " Believe me, my dear Gil Bias, you had better suppress your resentment. People of an inferior rank ought always to respect persons of quality, whatever cause they may have given them to complain. There are, I own, some very mean noblemen, who scarce deserve the least consideration; but as they have the power of doing mischief, they are to be feared."

I thanked the old valet de chambre for his good advice, which I promised to observe. " If you go, (said he) to Madrid, you shall visit Joseph Navarro, my nephew, who is clerk of the kitchen to Signior Don Balthazar de Zuniga; and, I dare say, a young man worthy of your friendship, frank, brisk, obliging, and forward to serve his friends: I answered, that I would not fail to wait on this Joseph Navarro, on my first arrival at Madrid, whither I was determined to go. I then quitted the archbishop's palace, with an intent never to set foot in it again. If I had still been in possession of my horse, I should have, perhaps, set out immediately for Toledo; but I had sold him while I was in favour, believing that I should have no further occasion for his service. I hired a furnished room, resolving to stay a month at Grenada, and then repair to the count de Polan.

As dinner-time approached, I asked of my landlady, if there was not an eating-house in the neighbourhood; and she answering, that there was an excellent one a few steps from her house, where there was very good accommodation, and a great deal of good company; I made her shew me the place, and going thither a little after, was directed into a large hall, which bore some resemblance to a refectory. Ten or twelve people sat at a large table, covered with a dirty cloth, conversing with one another, while every

every one eat his own little portion. My mets was likewise brought, which, at another time, would, doubtless, have made me regret the table I had lost; but I was then so much piqued against the archbishop, that the scanty allowance of my eating-house seemed preferable to the good cheer I had enjoyed in his palace. I condemned a variety of dishes, and arguing like the doctor of Valladolid, Unhappy are those, (said I to myself) who frequent such pernicious tables, where one must continually be on his guard against sensuality, for fear of overloading his stomach. Can one eat too little? In my ill-humour, I praised those very aphorisms I had hitherto very much neglected.

While I dispatched my commons, without fear of exceeding the bounds of temperance, the licentiate Lewis Garcias, now become vicar of Gabia, in the manner already related, came into the hall. He no sooner perceived me, than he came running to salute me with the utmost eagerness, or rather with all the expressions of excessive joy. He hugged me close, and I was obliged to undergo a very long compliment on the service I had done him. He fatigued me with his demonstrations of gratitude. "Fore gad, my dear patron, since I have had the good fortune to meet you here, we shan't part without a glass; but as there is no good wine in this eating-house, I will carry you, if you please, after our scanty repast, to a place where I will treat you with a bottle of fine dry Lucena, and a glass of fine Muscadine of Foncarrel. We must certainly commit that debauch. I wish I had the happiness of enjoying you a few days only, at my parsonage of Gabia. There you should be received like a generous Mecenas, to whom I owe the quiet and easy life I lead."

While he talked to me in this manner his allowance was served, and he went to work, without ceasing, however, to entertain me, at intervals, with something which he thought would flatter my vanity.

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I laid hold of this opportunity to speak in my turn; and as he did not forget to enquire about his friend the steward, I made no mystery of my leaving the archbishop's service. I even related to him the most minute circumstances of my disgrace, to which he listened with great attention. After what he had said to me, who would not have expected to hear him, penetrated with the most grateful sorrow, exclaim against the archbishop? But this was the farthest thing from his thoughts. He grew indifferent, and pensive, finished his dinner without speaking a word, then rising suddenly from table, bid me good b'w'ye, in a cool manner, and disappeared. The ungrateful wretch, seeing me no longer in a condition to serve him, spared himself even the trouble of concealing his sentiments. I laughed at his ingratitude, and looking at him with all the contempt he deserved, called to him aloud, that I might be heard, "Holloa! you sage chaplain of nuns, go and give orders to cool that delicious wine of Lucena, with which you have promised to regale me."

C H A P. VI.

Gil Blas goes to see a play at Grenada. His astonishment at the sight of one of the actresses; and the consequences of that event.

GARCIAS was no sooner out of the hall, than two well dressed cavaliers came in and sat down by me: they began to talk of the players of the Grenada company, and of a new comedy which was then on the stage. This piece, according to their discourse, made a great noise in the city; and I resolved to go and see it that very day; for I had not been at a play since my arrival at Grenada. As I had almost all that time lived in the archbishop's palace, where that diversion was anathematized, I had taken care not to indulge that pleasure, but amused myself entirely with my master's homilies.

I repair'd, therefore, at the proper time, to the play-house, where I found a numerous assembly; overheard, all around me, dissertations on the piece, before it began, and observed that every body undertook to criticise it. One person declared himself for, another against the performance. "Was there ever a work better composed?" said one on my right. "What a pitiful stile!" cried one on my left. Truly, if there are a good many bad authors, it must be allowed there are still a greater number of wretched critics: and when I consider the mortifications that dramatic poets must undergo, I am astonished, that there are any so bold, as to brave the ignorance of the multitude, and the dangerous censure of witlings, who sometimes corrupt the judgment of the public.

At length the gracioso * presented himself to open the scene. He was saluted, on his first appearance, with a general clap: by which I perceived he was one of those spoiled actors, in whom the pit pardons every thing. And, indeed, this player did not speak one word, nor perform one gesture, without attracting applause. The audience made him too sensible of the pleasure they had in seeing him on the stage; and he abused their favour accordingly. I perceived that he sometimes forgot himself in the middle of a scene, and put their prepossession in his behalf to too severe a proof; for they would often have done him justice, had they hissed, instead of extolling him to the skies.

There was likewise a clapping of hands at the appearance of some other actors, and, in particular, of an actress, who performed the part of a waiting-woman, whom, having considered with attention, no terms can express my surprize, when I recollect her in her person^t of Laura, my dear Laura! whom I still believed to be in the service of Arsenia at Madrid. I could not doubt that it was she; her shape,

* A favourite actor.

her features, the sound of her voice, every thing assured me that I was not mistaken. Nevertheless, as it I had mistrusted the evidence of my eyes and ears, I asked her name of a cavalier who sat by me, "Hey! said he; from whence come you? It seems you are just arrived, since you don't know the fair Estella."

The resemblance was too perfect for me to be deceived by this disguise: I could easily conceive, that Laura, when she changed her condition, had also altered her name; and curious to know her situation, for the publick is generally pretty well acquainted with the affairs of persons in her sphere, I begged to know of the same man, if this Estella had not some gallant of importance. He answered, that a Portuguese nobleman, called the Marquis de Marialva, who had been about two months at Grenada, was at a considerable expence on her account. He might have told me a great deal more, if I had not been afraid of fatiguing him with questions. I was more engrossed by the news which this cavalier had told me, than by the representation of the play; and if any body had asked the subject of the piece, when I came out, he would have embarrassed me not a little. I did nothing but muse upon Laura, or Estella, and firmly resolved to go and visit her next day; though I was not without anxiety about the reception I should meet with. I had reason to believe, that the sight of me would not yield her much pleasure in this brilliant situation of her affairs; nay, I imagined that such a good actress, in order to revenge herself upon one, with whom she had certainly cause to be dissatisfied, would probably disclaim his acquaintance. All this did not dissuade me from my design of going. After a slight repast, (for such only my eating house afforded) I went home to my lodgings, where I waited impatiently for next day.

I slept little that night, and got up before the sun; but as I concluded that a nobleman's mistress would not be visible so early, I spent three or four hours in dressing,

dressing, shaving powdering, and perfuming ; resolv-
ing to present myself before her, in such a condition,
as would give her no cause to blush at seeing me again.
I sallied out about ten o'clock, and repaired to her
lodging, to which I received a direction, at the house
where the players lived. She possessed the chief
apartment of a large house; the door of which being
opened to me by a chambermaid, I told her, that I
wanted to speak with dame Ettella. The maid went
in to signify my desire, and I immediately heard her
mistris pronounce, with a loud voice, "Who is this
young man? What does he want? Let him come
in." By this I concluded, that I had chosen an un-
seasonable time for my visit, that her Portuguese lo-
ver was at her toilet, and that her reason for speaking
so loud, was to persuade him that she never received
suspected messages. My conjecture was true; the
Marquis de Marialva commonly passed the morning
in her company; and I expected a very disagreeable
compliment, when this truly original actress seeing
me appear, ran to me with open arms, crying, "Ah!
my dear brother! is it you?" And, with these words,
embraced me several times. Then, turning to her
gallant, "My lord, (said she) pardon me for yielding
to the force of blood in your presence. After an ab-
sence of three years, I cannot behold a brother, whom
I tenderly love, without giving him some marks of
my affection. Well, my dear Gil Blas, (continued
she, addressing me anew) tell me some news of my
family, in what condition did you leave it?"

This question embarrassed me at first; but I soon
discovered Laura's intention, and seconding her arti-
fice, answered, with an air suited to the scene we had
to act. "Thank heaven, sister, our parents are in
good health." "I don't doubt (she replied) that
you are astonished to find me an actress at Grenada;
but do not condemn me unheard. Three years ago,
as you remember, my father thought he had settled
me to advantage, by giving me in marriage to Cap-
tain

tain Don Antonio Cællo, who carried me from the Asturias to Madrid, where he was born. Six months after our arrival in that city, having had an affair of honour brought upon him by his own violent humour, he killed a cavalier, who had taken it in his head to favour me with some attention. This gentleman being related to persons of great quality and credit, my husband, who had no interest, fled into Catalonia, with all the money and jewels he could find in the house; embarked at Barcelona, crossed into Italy, engaged in the service of the Venetians, and at last lost his life in the Morea, fighting against the Turks. In the mean time, our landed estate was confiscated, and I had but a very small jointure left. What could I do in such a troublesome extremity? I could not return into the Asturias: for what purpose go thither? All the consolation I should have received from my family, would have been no more than sympathy and condolance; on the other hand, I had been too well educated to be capable of embracing a life of libertinism. Upon what determination then could I fix? I have turned actress, to preserve my character."

The Marquis de Marialva, who lost not a word of the whole discourse, implicitly believed every syllable of what Don Antonio's widow was pleased to utter. He even joined in the conversation, and asked if I was in any business in Grenada, or elsewhere. I was in some doubt, at that instant, whether or no I should tell a lie; but thinking that unnecessary, I spoke truth, recounting every circumstance of my entering into, and quitting the archbishop's service; which afforded infinite diversion to the Portuguese nobleman. It is true, that notwithstanding my promise to Melchior, I made myself a little merry at the expence of his grace. But the most diverting part of the scene was, that Laura, who thought I invented a story in imitation of her, burst out into loud fits of laughter,

laughter, which she would probably have spared, had she known that I did not dissemble.

Having ended my narration, which I finished with the lodging I had hired, word was brought that dinner was on the table. Upon which I would have retired, in order to go and dine at my eating-house; but Laura stopping me said, "What do you mean, brother! you shall dine with me: and I won't even suffer you to live any longer in a hired room; for I intend you shall both eat and lodge in my house. Order your baggage to be brought hither this evening. I have a bed to spare."

The Portuguez nobleman, who, perhaps, was not very well pleased with this hospitality, addressing himself to Laura, said, "No, Estella, you have not convenience for him in these lodgings. Your brother seems to be a pretty young fellow, and the advantage he has in being so dear to you, interests me in his favour. I will take him into my service; he shall be my favourite secretary, and chief confidant. Let him not fail to come and sleep at my house this very night; for I will order an apartment to be prepared for the purpose. I will allow him a salary of four hundred ducats; and if, in the sequel, I have cause, as I hope I shall, to be satisfied with his behaviour, I will put him in a condition to console himself for being too sincere with the archbishop."

The acknowledgments which I made to the marquis at this juncture, were followed by those of Laura, who improved upon mine. So saying, he saluted his theatrical princess, and went away. She led me immediately into a closet, where seeing herself alone with me, "I should burst (cried she) if I was obliged to resist any longer the inclination I have to laugh." Then throwing herself into an easy chair, and holding her sides, she laughed immoderately, as if she had lost her senses. I found it impossible not to follow her example, and when we had indulged ourselves sufficiently, "Confess, Gil Blas (said she) that we have acted

acted a pleasant farce : but I did not expect such a catastrophe ; my design being no other than to provide for you a table and lodging in my house ; which that I might offer with decency, I made thee pass for my brother. I am ravished that such a good post has occurred to thee by accident. The Marquis de Marialva is a generous nobleman, who will even exceed his promise in thy favour. Another (added she) might not perhaps have given such a gracious reception to one who quits his friends without bidding them farewell : but I am one of those good creatures, who cannot help seeing again with pleasure, a rogue whom they have once loved." I candidly acknowledged my impolite behavior, for which I asked pardon. She then conducted me into a very handsome dining-room, where we sat down at table, and, as a waiting-woman and lacquey were present, behaved to one another like brother and sister.

Having dined, we went back into the same closet where we had conversed together before. There my incomparable Laura, giving a loose to all her natural gaiety, demanded an account of all my adventures since our separation. I made a faithful recital of the whole ; and when I had gratified her curiosity, she gave me the same satisfaction, in recounting the following history of herself.

C H A P. VII.

The history of Laura.

I Am going to relate, as succinctly as I can, by what accident I embraced the profession of a player.

Great events happened, after you left me in such an honourable manner. My mistress Arsenia, rather tired than disgusted with the world renounced the stage, and carried me with her, to a fine estate which she had bought near Zamora, with the price of her favours. In this city we soon contracted acquaint-

tance, and going thither, frequently, to pass a day or two, came back again, and shut ourselves up in our castle.

In one of these small journeys, Don Felix Maldonado, the corregidor's only son, saw me by accident, and happening to be pleased with my appearance, sought an opportunity of speaking with me in private, which, that I may conceal nothing from thee, I own, was facilitated by myself. He was a cavalier not yet twenty years old, fair as love himself, a mere pattern in shape, and still more engaging by his gallant and generous behaviour, than by his person: for he made me an offer of a large brilliant, which he had on his finger, with such a good grace, and pressing intreaties, that I could not for my soul refuse it. I did not possess such an amiable gallant with indifference. But what madness is it in abigails, to attach themselves to the young heirs of persons in authority! his father, the most severe of all corregidores, informed of our intelligence, made haste to prevent the consequences of it, and ordered me to be apprehended by a troop of alguazils, who carried me, regardless of my cries, to the hospital * of compassion. There, without any other form of process, the superior ordered me to be stript of my ring and dress, and cloathed with a long gown of grey cloth, girded with a strap of black leather, from whence a rosary of large beads hung down to my heels.

This being performed, I was conducted into a hall, where I found an old monk, of an order that I did not know, who sell a preaching penitence to me, much in the same manner as Dame Leonarda exhorted thee to patience in the cavern. He told me that I was very much obliged to those who caused me to be shut up in that place, for they had done me infinite service, in rescuing me from the snares of the devil. I will frankly own my ingratitude: far

* In other words, the house of correction.

from thinking myself beholden to those who had done me that good office, I loaded them with imprecations.

Eight days I passed in afflicting myself; but on the ninth, (for I counted the very minutes) my fate seemed to bear another aspect. Crossing a small court, I met the steward of our house, a person who ruled with unlimited sway; the superior herself was under his command; and he rendered an account of his stewardship to none but the corregidor, on whom, alone, he depended, and whose entire confidence he enjoyed. His name was Pedro Zendono: he was born in the town of Selsdon in Biscay, being a tall, pale, meagre man, whose figure would have served as an excellent pattern for the picture of a rank rogue. He scarce seemed to look at the sisters; and, in short, thou never sawest such an hypocritical face, although thou hast lived in an archbishop's palace.

Well then, (said she) I met this Signior Zendono, who stopt me, saying, " Daughter, be comforted, I am touched with your misfortune." He said no more, but went about his business, leaving me to make what commentaries I pleased on such a laconic text. As I believed him to be a good man, I innocently concluded, that he had taken the trouble of examining into the cause of my confinement, and finding me not guilty enough to deserve such unworthy treatment, was resolved to do me a good office with the corregidor. I was little acquainted with the Biscayan, who had quite other intentions. He then revolved in his mind, the scheme of a journey, which he imparted to me, a few days after. " My dear Laura, (said he) I am so much affected with your sufferings, that I am resolved to put an end to them immediately. In so doing, I know I shall embrace my own ruin; but I am no longer master of myself. I intend to take you out of prison to-morrow, and conduct you in person to Madrid; being resolved to sacrifice every thing to the pleasure of being your deliverer.

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I was ready to swoon with joy, at these words of Zendono, who judging, by my acknowledgements, that I longed for nothing so much as liberty, had the impudence to carry me off next day, in sight of everybody, by the following stratagem. He told the superior, that he had orders to bring me to the corregidor, who was at a pleasure house, two leagues from town; and, with the utmost assurance, made me get into a post-chaise with him, drawn by two good mules, which he had bought for the purpose, and attended by no other servants than a valet, who conducted the chaise, and was entirely devoted to the steward. We set out, not for Madrid, as I imagined, but towards the frontiers of Portugal, where we arrived, before the corregidor of Zamora could get notice of our flight, and send the beagles of justice in pursuit of us.

Before we entered Braganza, the Biscayan made me put on a suit of men's cloaths, which he had the precaution to provide; and now looking upon me as fairly embarked with him, said to me, at the inn where we lodged, " Fair Laura, be not offended with me, for bringing you into Portugal: for, the corregidor of Zamora will make search for us, in our native country, as two criminals to whom Spain ought not to afford a retreat. But (added he) we can shelter ourselves from his resentment in this foreign kingdom, although it be, at present, under the dominion of the Spanish monarchy. Here, we shall, at least, be more secure than in our own country. Follow, therefore, a man who adores you; and let us settle at Coimbra, where I will become a spy for the holy office, and under the shade of that formidable tribunal, our days will smoothly glide in ease and pleasure."

Such a forward proposal gave me to understand, that I had to do with a cavalier, who did not chuse to redress the grievances of damsels, merely for the glory of knight-errantry. I perceived that he depended a good deal upoh my gratitude, and still more upon my distress. Nevertheless, though these

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two considerations spoke to me in his behalf, I rejected his proposal with disdain. 'Tis true, indeed, I had two strong reasons for shewing myself so reserved? I disliked his person, and distrusted his circumstances. But, when returning to the charge, he offered to wed me, as a preliminary, and shewed me that his stewardship had put him in a condition to enjoy himself for a long time, I won't deny that I began to listen to his addresses. I was dazzled by the gold and jewels which he spread before me, and found, by experience, that as many metamorphoses are made by interest as by love. My Biscayan became, gradually, quite another man in my eyes; his tall, withered carcase assumed the form of a fine shape; his pale complexion seemed agreeably fair; and I gave a favourable appellation to his hypocritical look. I then accepted his hand, without reluctance, in the face of heaven, which he called to witness our engagement. After this, he suffered no contradiction on my part; we set out again on our travels, and, in a short time, Coimbra beheld a new family within its walls.

My husband purchased for me, some handsome cloaths, adapted to my own sex, and presented me with several diamonds, among which I recollect that of Don Felix Maldonado. This discovery was sufficient to make me conceive how all the jewels I had got were acquired, and to persuade me that I had not married a scrupulous observer of the seventh article of the decalogue. But, considering myself as the first cause of his dexterity, I forgave him in my heart; for a woman will excuse even the bad actions which her beauty prompts the men to commit; otherwise, I should have thought him an execrable villain.

5 AP 66

END of VOL. IV..

Of the ADVENTURES of GIL BLAS.

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